

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

January 12, 2023



- Agenda Item:** Horizon Science Academy Des Moines
- State Board Priority:** All
- State Board Role/Authority:** Per Iowa Administrative Code 256E, the State Board shall approve or deny a charter school application.
- Presenter(s):** Janet Boyd, Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement
- Eric Heitz, Administrative Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement
- Attachment(s):** Three
- Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve the charter with or without conditions per the Application Summary.
- Background:** Iowa Code 256E established a charter school law, where both local school boards and founding groups may apply to the State Board for approval to establish and operate a charter school. Charter schools, under this law, are a part of the state’s program of public education. Horizon Science Academy Des Moines follows the founding group-state board model. Iowa Administrative Rule chapter 19 states that in order to operate a charter school for the 2023-2024 school year, applications are due no later than November 1, 2022, and the Horizon Science

Academy Des Moines application was received prior to the deadline. Department staff have scored the charter school application, completed an interview with the applicant, and attended a public forum with residents, all of which are required components of the application.



January 12, 2023

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines Charter School Application

Background

[Iowa Code 256E](#) established a new charter school law in Iowa that affirmed charter schools shall be a part of the state's public education system. The law allows for two different charter models; the school board-state board model and the founding group-state board model. In conjunction with Iowa Code 256E, the Iowa State Board of Education (State Board) has also approved [Iowa Administrative Rule Chapter 19](#). Chapter 19 further established specific application deadlines, additional performance criteria, and finance modifications for charter schools. The deadline established in Chapter 19 to submit an application to open a charter school during the 2023-2024 school year was November 1, 2022, 11:59 PM.

Once the Iowa Administrative Rule chapter 19 was adopted by the State Board, the Iowa Department of Education (Department) developed charter school application guidance and application forms for both models. These documents are posted to the Department's [charter school webpage](#). As requested by potential applicants, Department staff provided technical assistance prior to the deadline.

The Department received a founding group-state board model application from Horizon Science Academy Des Moines Charter School. The applicant was notified via email the application was received before the deadline and was under review.

Application Review

Iowa Code 256E.5 subsection 5 states:

In reviewing and evaluating charter school applications, the state board shall employ procedures, practices, and criteria consistent with nationally recognized principles and standards for reviewing charter school applications. Each application review shall include thorough evaluation of the written application, an in-person interview with the applicant, and an opportunity in a public forum for local residents of the public school district within which the applicant proposes to locate the charter school to learn about and provide input on each application.

The Department selected readers for the charter applications from the bureaus of School Improvement and School Business Operations. A training for readers was conducted on Wednesday, November 9, 2022, that included a review of Iowa Code 256E and an extensive discussion of each required component of the written application. Readers were instructed to submit their scores for the written application no later than November 21, 2022. Readers reviewed the application and provided clarifying questions to be asked during the founding group interview. Department staff reviewed the readers' score sheets and tallied final scores. The recommendation for approval with or without conditions is based on consultant scores and recommendations (score summary available upon request).

Members of the Bureau of School Improvement conducted a virtual meeting with the applicant to define the parameters of the interview and public forum, and both were scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, 2022. The interview occurred virtually and a public forum was held in-person.

Two Department staff conducted an interview with Chris Murphy, Sunnie Richer, and Roger Brooks, who make up the founding group for Horizon Science Academy Des Moines on Friday, December 9 at 9 AM. Interview questions were developed from the purpose of a charter school outlined in 256E.1 subsection 3 and from comments provided by readers during review.

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines held a public forum on November 29, 2022, 6 PM. Department staff traveled to Thoreau Center in Des Moines to join the forum. Twenty-one individuals attended the meeting. The public comment consisted of a presentation by Chris Murphy from Concept Schools and questions from attendees. PowerPoint and recording available upon request.

Recommendation

The Horizon Science Academy Des Moines Charter School received a sum score across readers of greater than zero on each of the required components in Iowa Code 256E. The applicant responded affirmatively to all of the assurances and conditions in the charter school application. The applicant did not request any waivers. The submitted calendar indicates a start date prior to the required August 23 date, legal counsel advises the applicant is exempt from Iowa Code 279.10 (1). It is recommended that the State Board approve the charter, with or without conditions. The recommendation for approval with or without conditions is based on consultant scores/recommendations and the completion of the required elements in Iowa Code 256E.

Potential Conditions:

- Provide documentation to the Department of Education how and when requested.
- Meet with the Department of Education how and when requested.
- Required meetings with Student Reporting and School Business consultants.
- Any other items needed or requested by the Iowa State Board of Education.

Appendices

- Horizon Science Academy Des Moines Charter School application.
- Reader scores summary.
- Interview summary.

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines Charter School Interview

On December 9, 2022, Eric Heitz, Administrative Consultant, and Marietta Rives, Consultant, from the Iowa Department of Education interviewed the Founding Group members of Horizon Science Academy Des Moines (HSADSM): Dr. Chris Murphy with Concept Schools, Sunnie Richer and Roger Brooks, both Des Moines community leaders.

Below are the questions and the participants' responses.

As a result of this interview, HSADSM provided additional documents that support or better explain their responses: See the attached documents: [Sample Teacher Evaluation Form](#), [Teacher Performance Evaluation Guidebook](#) and the [proposed calendar for the school year](#).

1. The HSADSM primary vision is "All students will enter college ready to excel in STEM subjects." Considering the first five years of the charter will only serve grades K-7 with grade seven starting the fifth year, how will the school realistically monitor this vision? In addition, the mission "To foster an environment of inquiry and a love of learning so students are prepared to thrive in a STEM focused college and world" how does the charter plan to monitor the mission?

Response: Mr. Brooks-I view this question as most important of all. I have lived 65 years in Des Moines and I am deeply involved in this community. I have always been a strong advocate for Des Moines schools and have experienced much civic involvement. At one time, I owned Iowa Realty and that was at a time when agents herded buyers to the suburbs because of the schools. I am hopeful that with the new law the founding group can open a magnet school for the elementary level.

Mr. Brooks explained that when a student spent one year in Concept Schools their reading and math scores improved 1.2 years. Mr. Brooks stated that members of the founding group met with the public to seek approval for the proposal and that, at this point, they feel that the founding board has selected a "savvy set of school board members" that will be charged with monitoring all aspects of the school's operation.

Ms. Richer added that she feels that she supports the equity piece of education.

Dr. Murphy went on to explain that he believes that families should have the right to choose the educational pathway for their children, that he is interested in serving "underserved" populations, and that all eyes are on HSADSM at this time.

Dr. Murphy added that by starting small, focusing specifically on hands-on, rich STEM experiences students will excel. All aspects of the educational experience at HSADSM will be STEM related--literacy materials and other resources will all be focused on STEM fields.

HSADSM will monitor the level of engagement with after school activities.

HSADSM always uses a future forward process--middle school students are taking high school courses, etc.

Monitoring will be the responsibility of the board. A regional superintendent will be in place to oversee all aspects of the school's operation. Finances are monitored by everybody: building administration, regional superintendent, the board, and Concept Schools finance team.

A meeting will be scheduled for board planning.

2. A public charter must serve all interested students, how will you ensure all students are served by the charter?

Response: The school will not discriminate against any student -- everybody is welcome from the attendance area HSADSM has identified. Lottery procedures can be put in place if there is an overwhelming response to the school's opening. The principal is typically in charge of acceptance and enrollment practices.

3. What services does your charter school provide to target populations that are not already being provided by existing districts? What data did the founding group collect to determine that the target population is not being served by the Des Moines Public School District?

Response: HSADSM doesn't anticipate that they will pull students from some of the high-quality Des Moines schools. HSADSM will offer a small school atmosphere; will have an extended school year--students are in school longer--more professional development time for teachers, free tutoring programs, free extracurricular activities, weekend school opportunities. An multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) structure will be in place to support student learning through interventions.

The organizers have used state test reports to identify pockets of schools that are not being successful. These are typically schools with high African American or Hispanic populations. They strive to make personal connections with families to build trust by conducting home visits, etc.

4. It does not appear to the Department that there is a strong grassroots interest in the charter by parents and guardians in the Des Moines Public School District. Can you share data that shows this demographic is represented? Do you have evidence supporting your potential enrollment figures in question 4? The information in question 5 does not appear to address the interest of parents and guardians.

Response: Ms. Richer described how she has been involved in the Riverbend Area Afterschool Program (RAASP) for many years. A need was recognized and the community came together to meet that need. Mr. Richer, herself, has tutored two young ladies from the RAASP for multiple years and these students are now in high school. Ms. Richer truly believes in equitable opportunities.

HSADSM doesn't have a location set just yet. Once they get the location set, they expect to find plenty of demand.

The group set off looking at target zones based on achievement data. They followed up with community meetings by reaching out to neighborhood associations, community and church leaders and shared how this charter school option could work in their neighborhoods. They used community input to make the decision of starting with early childhood with a specific interest in literacy. HSADSM does not plan to or feel that they will be competing with traditional neighborhood schools.

5. With HSADSM developing its own curriculum, how will the charter ensure that teachers are utilizing research-based strategies when working with students?

Response: Dr. Murphy described how Concept Schools has a number of schools across the country and will be able to help provide research-based strategies.

Concept Schools already has a team of academic professionals in place that will look at alignment of state standards, best practices and local curriculum. Curriculum assessments will be aligned with state assessments as well. Teachers will receive the targeted professional development regarding curriculum implementation that they need to make sure they are successful in the classroom. Concept Schools currently partners with PowerSchool and the curriculum is already created and in place on their platform so all teachers will have access to it.

Monitoring will be through teacher evaluation.

6. While it is stated curriculum is aligned and mapped to Iowa's Academic Standards and SEL Competencies, what specific evidence can be provided to show this alignment (ex: an actual curriculum map, a sample lesson plan, etc)?

Response: See above. HSADSM plans to use the curriculum available through PowerSchool. Grade level articulation will be developed through meetings with staff.

7. How do you plan to ensure that all students have access to high quality instructional strategies? What is your plan to implement and monitor for fidelity of implementation of these strategies?

Response: Teacher evaluation process. HSADSM will implement the Charlotte Danielson Model of teacher evaluation which is closely aligned to the state of Iowa's teacher evaluation process.

That process includes the introduction of effective teaching strategies through professional learning. Monitoring of implementation takes place during walk-throughs by appropriately trained and licensed principals. Data collected through these walk-throughs is then shared with the superintendent and the board.

The entirety of the process will be aligned with Iowa law and will support the development of school leaders.

8. In what ways does the charter plan to implement the science of reading in early literacy? While there is enhanced focus on the writing process, how will the charter utilize explicit, systematic and sequential instruction in early literacy to instruct students at the universal, supplemental, and intensive tiers for those students who are just learning to read?

Response: HSADSM will use a data driven approach to selecting and implementing literacy practices with a focus on teacher efficacy. A dedicated director of K-2 or 3-5 literacy will oversee the process of aligning instructional practices with mastery assessments. Using the information provided by assessment, teachers will be able to adjust instruction to meet student needs.

9. The first purpose of a charter school according to 256E is "Improve student learning, well-being and postsecondary success" How will your charter ensure that occurs?

Response: The digital platform, Panorama, will be utilized as teachers learn to collect and monitor data regarding student needs and then work to meet those needs in small group settings. A MTSS will be utilized as they analyze and use data to support the academic and social, emotional learning needs of students. The assistant principal of culture supports all of the individuals who provide resources to meet student and family needs.

10. How will you measure and evaluate program implementation and learning outcomes? How will the charter utilize the data for the required Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) to improve student outcomes? In addition, what about the Performance Framework in chapter 19?

Response: Teachers will be able to access and use data from universal screeners and progress monitoring tools through Performance Matters, a pocket of PowerSchool, that makes the process simple and accessible. Implementation will be monitored, as stated above, through principal walkthroughs, professional development and teacher evaluation aligned to Iowa Code.

11. How will you regularly use data to make decisions about student instruction and interventions/supports, and monitor student progress? Is the founding group familiar with the Iowa State Assessment and the requirements of the Iowa ESSA plan?

Response: HSADSM will utilize an MTSS model with a committee established to monitor implementation. Two department meetings are held each week: one to focus on academic data and one to focus on behavioral data. These meetings are facilitated by the assistant principal. The assistant principal is charged with collecting data regarding student progress and teacher feedback and performance.

This is a model that Concept Schools currently utilizes and will ensure that it is aligned and in place at HSADSM.

12. How will the flexibility from statutory restraints help the charter better serve students and meet the needs of a diverse population?

Response: HSADSM will offer smaller classes: maximum of 20 students in kindergarten and 25 for first grade and up. Teachers will be able to provide small group interventions, offer additional content options, like coding, and more time with content.

Additional contact hours for teachers to connect with families through home visits are things not done in traditional public schools. HSADSM will be fully compliant with all legal and licensure requirements and will not need waivers.

13. What processes and procedures do you have in place to ensure all students are served equitably? For example, how would the charter serve students with 504 plans, gifted students, or at-risk?

Response: HSADSM policies are aligned to local requirements and will be vetted by local counsel. HSADSM is aware of and plans to utilize the area education agency for evaluation and programming for students in need of specially designed instruction. HSADSM teachers will utilize an MTSS model to differentiate instructional practices for all students.

In addition, there will be a multitude of extracurricular activities and events provided to students through HSADSM. Although HSADSM is seeking academically talented and gifted students, they are a public institution and are required to serve all populations.

14. During the public meeting, the presentation indicated a high rate of college acceptance. Please share data indicating how many students or percent of students complete college? Find employment after graduation?

Response: Nationally, the percentage of students in *their* target population that enter college is 20%. Concept Schools track record is above that. HSADSM will establish a variety of practices and events to raise awareness regarding higher education:

*Counselors work with middle school/high school students to develop career pathways.

*The Future Institute is designed to provide information and resources to college bound students and has increased the rate of college graduation by 25%.

*They work with families to complete the FAFSA.

*Outside fundraising provides money for kids to use toward college needs. They are working to increase how they track college and career data.

15. The evaluation rubrics for certified staff appear to rely on measures that would only apply to a charter high school and/or post-secondary schools. How will the charter modify the evaluation rubric to be better aligned with the teacher/grades the charter is currently proposing to hire?

Response: HSADSM will need to modify *their* Charlotte Danielson Model teacher evaluation model to better align with the Iowa teacher evaluation model. They will send us examples from other states.

16. The salary schedule is not consistent with geographically close districts. How will the charter school work to recruit and retain qualified staff?

Response: Des Moines Public School currently starts teachers with no experience at \$44,000. Horizon will start these same individuals at \$50,000. The board is having discussions regarding salaries, may explore bonuses, and look at other financial incentives to hire the best teachers.

17. With such a difference between projected growth and historical growth, the State per pupil amount will vary by \$1,000 by 2028. How will the charter school compensate should the state or federal revenue not grow by the projection of 4% annually? (Budget)

Response: Most of our schools see only 1-2% in funding per year. At the present time, HSADSM has made a budget assumption and realizes that current and future revenue depends greatly on actual enrollment. In addition to state funding, the governing board is greatly interested in fundraising to support this effort.

18. How is the "extended day and school year" defined and how will it be funded? (p. 28)

Response: The additional time will be stated up front as an expectation and will be factored into the teacher contract.

19. How will the social supports that meet community needs, referenced under home visits, be funded? (p. 29)

Response: The initial home visits help to establish relationships between teachers and families. Once that has occurred, there is much more open communication between families and the school. It doesn't mean that the school will be providing all requested services, but using the MTSS model they will provide the service or steer families toward services they need.

20. What funds will be used to pay for uniforms? (p. 32)

Response: Their expectation is that parents will pay for the shirt with the logo. If parents need help with that, they need to work with the board. The board will also be seeking donations to help cover these costs for families.

21. What funding source will be used to pay for the "private property" referenced on p. 35 as no public funds may be used for costs that do not meet public purpose?

Response: Planning to lease a building.

22. Please confirm Jeff Goodman is a resident of Iowa (founding member resumes).

Response: Yes, he is.

23. Who will serve as the charter school's administrator required pursuant to 256E? Does this person hold the required BOEE licensure?

Response: The board will select the individual and they will be required to have and maintain the appropriate licensure.

24. An updated calendar is required that reflects minimum calendar (days or hours) requirements. Additionally, there appear to be multiple errors on the calendar.

Response: See attached calendar.

25. Will the charter school provide an updated code of conduct that meets the requirements of section 14.1? It is unclear if the charter has specifically addressed code of conduct requirements for students with special education services.

Response: Will make sure this is compliant with the law.

26. Certain types of categorical funding are not appropriate for operational costs. Not all categorical funding has an allowance for indirect costs. Will the management contract charge 10% of those revenues as well for

operational oversight, noting this would impact other funding sources since the 10% could not be paid from those funds?

Response: This is a nonprofit. Will make sure this is compliant with the law.



Charter School Application: Founding Group- State Board Model

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Instructions

The required criteria and evaluation of charter school applications shall be completed pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 256E, and are detailed in the Application Guidance to Create a Founding Group-State Board Model Charter School. Please carefully read the guidance before beginning this application. For items that require attachments please utilize designated appendices. **It is highly recommended that potential applicants seek technical assistance from the Iowa Department of Education (Department) prior to beginning a charter school application.** Contact information is available within the guidance, application, and the [Charter School Webpage](#).

Introduction

This application is to only be submitted by an independent founding group* wishing to establish and operate a Founding Group-Iowa State Board of Education (State Board) model charter school within the boundaries of the state that operates as a new attendance center (i.e., school building) independently from a public school district.

*"Founding group' means a person, group of persons, or education service provider [or "an education management organization, charter school management organization, or other person with whom a charter school contracts for educational program implementation or comprehensive management"] that develops and submits an application for a charter school to the state board under this chapter" (Iowa Code § 256E.2(4)-(5)).

Application Submission Requirements

For an application to be reviewed, the founding group must complete and submit this form with all its required attachments by November 1, 11:59 pm of the school year preceding the establishment of the charter school. **Each question on the form is required and incomplete applications may not be reviewed for approval.** The founding group must submit the completed application form, and all its attachments, via email to janet.boyd@iowa.gov or by mail to:

Iowa Department of Education
Attention: Janet Boyd, Charter School Consultant
400 East 14th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

Technical Assistance Available by Request

It is strongly encouraged that applicants contact the Department to receive technical assistance before completing the application. If the independent founding group wishes to utilize technical assistance, it must contact Janet Boyd at janet.boyd@iowa.gov or 515-745-3385 before submission. Once an application is submitted, it is considered final, and no additional changes will be accepted.

Additional Guidance

For additional information on the requirements and evaluation process, see the Founding Group-State Board application guidance on the [Charter Schools webpage](#).

2021-2022 Charter School Application: Founding Group-State Board Model

Please note that all information submitted in the charter school application is public information.

Applicant Contact Information			
First Name:	<u>Christopher</u>	Last Name:	<u>Murphy</u>
Email Address:	<u>cmurphy@conceptschoools.org</u>	Phone Number:	<u>847-8243380</u>

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Provide an executive summary of the proposed charter school.

Briefly summarize the proposed charter school's ability to meet the charter school purposes outlined in Iowa Code section 256E.1, subsection 3, (see the Purposes of Charter Schools section of the guidance).

Concept Schools partnered with two retired business and community leaders to form a founding group that developed and submitted this application for a charter school to the Iowa State Board of Education under Iowa Code § 256E.

For more than 20 years as a nonprofit charter management organization, Concept Schools has implemented a comprehensive service public charter school management model that, among other things, values STEM education, college-preparation, and community engagement. Parents and the community of Des Moines, Iowa deserve a new high-quality, non-selective, and tuition-free public-school option. Concept Schools plans to bring that choice in the form of the K-12 charter school: **Horizon Science Academy Des Moines**.

Part of the state's public education program, Horizon Science Academy Des Moines is aligned with the purposes of charter schools as outlined in Iowa Code § 256E.1(3).

The mission of all Concept network schools focuses on preparing all students for postsecondary school success through rigorous learning experiences focused on STEM and college preparation.

Concept network schools increase opportunities for work-based learning, early literacy intervention, and serve at-risk populations. Our curriculum has been proven to accelerate student learning, which prevents learning loss and closes achievement gaps between peers.

As part of its comprehensive services, Concept Schools provides sustained professional support for staff to ensure they are effectively trained in a variety of research-based teaching and learning strategies across all content areas. Student academic and behavioral growth and proficiency are regularly measured and monitored through a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support approach that involves teachers, administrators, and parents. Students are then provided targeted interventions and challenges to ensure that all students are effectively supported to achieve at their highest levels.

In addition to academic services, Concept Schools provides its schools with comprehensive financial and operational services. These include budget preparation, purchasing, payroll management, human resource, and health and benefits packages. By centralizing these services, Concept network schools like Horizon Science Academy Des Moines are freed up to invest energies towards establishing and maintaining positive relationships with its community and enriching the lives of Des Moines youth.

1. Executive Summary

Given the demands of the workforce across the nation, there is an increased need for schools with a particular focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM. Students in the communities where most Concept network schools are often styled as high-risk. A steep decline in test scores is observed in schools in these regions, and we believe that Horizon Science Academy Des Moines (HSADSM) will fill a great need in this community with our strong academic programs focused on STEM and college and career readiness.

Roughly 66% of the Des Moines Public Schools student population is racially diverse, and about 76% qualify for free and reduced lunch programs. Similarly, 85% of Concept students are racially diverse, and about 85% qualify for free and reduced lunch programs. Over the years, Concept network schools have developed a positive reputation within their communities as safe and secure locations where students are regularly challenged to think critically and develop their academic and social skills all while maintaining their own language and culture.

Concept will base HSADSM on a proven and successful existing school design. Concept established its first school in Ohio in 1999 and has since expanded to 31 charter public schools spread across the Midwest. All Concept-managed schools are in urban low-income settings serving predominantly minority students.

Each school start-up is more successful than last, as effective strategies are implemented, and concerns are addressed in a proactive fashion. Such growth is also in line with Concept's strategic plan, which was developed through a process by Concept Schools Board of Directors and staff members. Therefore, Concept Schools is fully capable of handling such expansion operationally and financially.

Over the years, Concept Schools has collaborated with local school boards to successfully receive initial approval for a charter school from ten different charter authorizers in six Midwestern states. Our reputation is strong, and our support goes well beyond the start-up services required to open a school. 100% of our charter renewal applications have been approved.

Through the years, HSADSM will grow from a school serving about 200 K-3 students to a K-12 school serving about 650 students. HSADSM will have unique characteristics including a small school environment with a maximum of 20 students in kindergarten sections and 25 students 1st through 12th grade, personalized education, data-driven instruction and ongoing assessment of learning, higher standards and expectations, increased student engagement, college preparatory & STEM-focused curriculum, academic and social support programs, high parental involvement, and community partnerships.

Part of its mission to provide a world-class education, a Concept-managed HSADSM will create an effective learning environment of higher standards and expectations with a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. HSADSM will be such an effective learning environment in which:

- Teachers, parents, and students work together to develop young people who are confident and achieve academic excellence in a powerful college prep curriculum.
- Students do not question “whether” they will go to college, but instead ask “when” and “where”.
- Students understand that with hard work, dreams are possible; and
- Students develop the skills in math, science, and technology necessary to become bold inquirers, analytical thinkers, and ethical leaders.

These efforts, combined with an emphasis on collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education, Concept, the HSADSM Founding Board, and the HSADSM staff and community, will foster the environment necessary to effect positive educational change.

Concept has earned a reputation for establishing safe and challenging learning environments for all students. The accolades that Concept network schools have received over the years include earning Blue Ribbon School Awards by the U.S. Department of Education, the Federal Title I Distinguished School Award, Excellent and Excellent with Distinction ratings by the state Departments of Education, being named among the highest-performing charter

1. Executive Summary

management organizations across the United States in Stanford University's 2013 Center for Research on Education Outcomes study, and being portrayed in the research about high-performing schools such as "Needles in Haystack" of the Fordham Foundation.

Schools within the Concept network are regularly recognized as the best charter schools in their states. Notably, Horizon Science Academy McKinley Park was named as the #1 charter elementary and middle school in Illinois, and Michigan Math and Science Academy Dequindre was named the top high school in Michigan.

Serving roughly 13,500 students, Concept-managed schools are in historically underserved communities across the Midwest. Regardless of their background, students in Concept network schools perform significantly higher than those of typical district schools. High schools within the network have nearly 100% college acceptance rates, and graduates are regularly accepted to top-tier universities such as MIT, Notre Dame, the universities of Harvard, Chicago, Cornell, Northwestern, Brown, Purdue, and Iowa.

2. Proposed Vision and Mission

2.1. Describe the vision of the proposed charter school.

Describe the overall purpose and intention of the proposed charter school.

The vision of Horizon Science Academy Des Moines is:

- All students will enter college ready to excel in STEM subjects.

In order to achieve the mission and vision, Horizon Science Academy Des Moines values:

- Respect - all members of the school community, including families, staff, and students, have equal worth and should be treated with respect
- Responsibility - all families, staff, and students have choices, and teachers, parents, and students should be responsible for their actions
- Integrity - belonging to a community requires a commitment to the common good. The community is stronger when everyone can be counted upon to be honest and trustworthy
- Courage - having the courage to try new things expands minds and causes families, staff, and students to reach beyond their own expectations
- Curiosity - the ability to wonder and create connections stimulates learning. Inquiry will be fostered on the part of families, staff, and students
- Effort - success is accomplished when families, staff, and students are willing to do what it takes to accomplish their vision of the future

Characteristics of HSADSM include:

- College Preparatory Curriculum with STEM Focus
- Personalized Education
- Higher Standards and Expectations
- Data-driven Instruction Through Ongoing Assessment of Learning
- Increased Student Engagement
- Knowledgeable and Skilled Staff

2.2. Describe the mission for the proposed charter school and identify the targeted student population(s) and community(ies) the proposed charter school intends to serve.

Describe the mission and objectives of the charter school, including the targeted student population(s) and community(ies) to be served.

2. Proposed Vision and Mission

The mission of the Horizon Science Academy Des Moines is:

- To foster an environment of inquiry and a love of learning so students are prepared to thrive in a STEM-focused college and world.

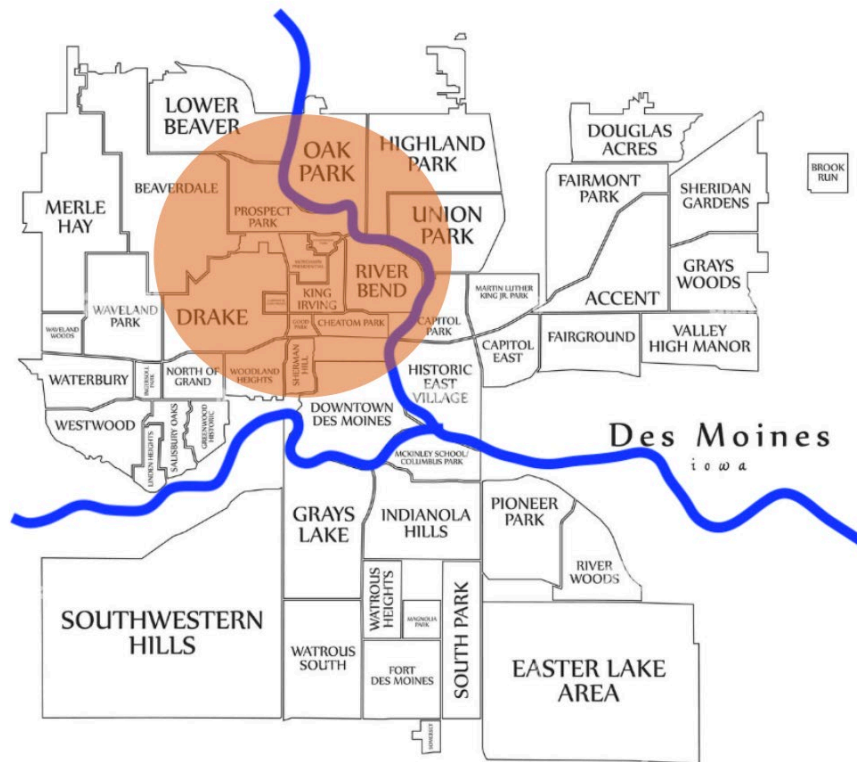
Concept Schools has a 20-year history of successfully providing a high-quality, charter public education to historically underserved communities. Across Concept's 31 network schools, nearly 85% of students are racially diverse and about 85% qualify for free and reduced lunch programs.

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines intends to serve a similar population. HSADSM will provide educational opportunities to students and families that they may otherwise not have access to. Through researching the socioeconomics, demographics, and successes of schools within Des Moines, and collaborating with community leaders, founding group members, and governing board members, HSADSM is confident that neighborhoods noted below will be ideal locations to not only support student learning, but to enhance their communities.

3. Proposed Location

3.1. What is the address (Street Address, City, Zip Code) of the proposed charter school? Or, if not yet identified, describe the proposed geographic area within the state where the charter school is proposed to be located.

The founding group is collaborating with CBRE Hubbell to identify a facility within the near northwest quadrant of Des Moines, and within the attendance zone of Des Moines Public Schools.



HSADSM has targeted several neighborhoods in the near northwest quadrant, including, Drake, Prospect Park, King Irving, Sherman Hill, Cheatom Park, River Bend and Oak Park.

4. Proposed Grade Levels and Enrollment

4.1. Select each grade level that would be served during the five-year duration of the charter school contract by placing a mark in the first column below (Check all that apply). For each grade level selected, indicate the minimum, planned, and maximum enrollment for each year of the charter school contract.

4.1 HSADSM Initial Grade Levels Served

Grade	Yes / No	Grade	Yes / No
PreK	No	6	Yes
K	Yes	7	Yes
1	Yes	8	No
2	Yes	9	No
3	Yes	10	No
4	Yes	11	No
5	Yes	12	No

The proposed grade levels and enrollment of HSADSM would continue to expand following the initial 5-year charter term, adding 50 students per grade level each school year. HSADSM would ultimately serve at least 640 students across grades K-12 beginning in Fall 2032.

4.2. Download, complete, and upload the [4.2 enrollment table template](#)—to indicate the minimum, planned, and maximum enrollment for each year of the charter school contract—for each grade level selected in 4.1. [Upload]

4.2 HSADSM Enrollment Table Template

x	Grade	Year 1 Enrollment	Year 2 Enrollment	Year 3 Enrollment	Year 4 Enrollment	Year 5 Enrollment
x	K	Min: 20 Planned: 40 Max: 40	Min: 40 Planned: 40 Max: 40	Min: 40 Planned: 40 Max: 40	Min: 40 Planned: 40 Max: 40	Min: 40 Planned: 40 Max: 40
x	1	Min: 25 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	2	Min: 25 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	3	Min: 25 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	4	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	5	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 25	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	6	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 25	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
x	7	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 25	Min: 50 Planned: 50 Max: 50
	TOTAL	Min: 95 Planned: 190 Max: 190	Min: 240 Planned: 240 Max: 265	Min: 290 Planned: 290 Max: 315	Min: 340 Planned: 340 Max: 365	Min: 390 Planned: 390 Max: 415

5. Evidence of Need and Community Support

5.1 and 5.2 should address how the independent founding group gathered, engaged, and assessed the community's need and support for the proposed school. Evidence may include survey results, minutes from community meetings, summarized public comments, or any other documentation of community need and support for the proposed charter school.

5.1. Describe the evidence supporting the need for the proposed charter school.

[A Harris Poll](#) (May 2022) continues that about 83% of parents of color want more public charter schools. 74% of all parents (78% of low-income) would consider sending their child to a public charter school if one were available. Public charter schools have been proven to have a positive impact on their communities. Concept network schools establish partnerships with local organizations to provide a variety of community resources. For example:

- Horizon Science Academy Columbus Middle School partners with the National Youth Advocacy Program for our school-based clinical mental health services, Westerville Area Resource Ministry for food donations and additional resources, and the Girl Scouts Club for student activities. It also collaborates with Nationwide Children's Hospital with its *Signs of Suicide* program.
- HSA Dayton schools partner with Dayton Children's Hospital Youth and Family Resource Connection Services to provide school families with medical and behavioral resources
- Noble Academy Columbus received a \$58K grant from Ohio State University to provide English-language learners instructional support and to increase our ELL community engagement
- Several schools in Columbus partner with the Central Ohio Manufacturing Partnership to help guide career-technical educational pathways
- Chicago schools partner with local city aldermen to utilize school facilities for community events, meetings, and health and social service support
- Gateway Science Academy in St. Louis partners with the mayor's office to promote the city's services including city-wide summer school programs.

When seeking growth opportunities, Concept Schools reviews several aspects of a community to determine the need for a new charter school. The educational statutes must allow for charter growth. When Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds signed House File 813 and HF847 in 2021, the acts modified former charter law to establish a founding group-state board model and to provide funding formula encouraging charter school growth. These acts allowed a founding group to apply to the State Board for approval to establish and operate a charter school within the boundaries of the state that operates as a new attendance center independently from a public school district.

Concept Schools analyzes the academic proficiency and growth data of existing school districts within the state. As a non-profit organization that manages more than 30 charter schools across the Midwest in urban cities such as Indianapolis, St. Louis, and Chicago, it made sense for Concept to identify Des Moines as a city in need of an additional educational option to support the growth and learning of its youth. There are many highly successful schools within Des Moines, but there are also pockets of schools that are identified as a *priority* or *needs improvement* where the founding group intends to open a charter school.

For more information about the Harris Poll: <https://www.publiccharters.org/latest-news/2022/08/24/new-report-shows-parents-more-engaged-ever-education-and-never-going-back>

5.2. Describe the evidence of community support for the proposed charter school.

Founding members Sunnie Richer and Roger Brooks are longtime Des Moines residents, business, and community leaders. Struck by the lack of high-quality, tuition-free public educational opportunities in Des Moines, Sunnie and Roger connected with Concept Schools through a mutual colleague. They visited Horizon Science Academy McKinley Park in Chicago, IL in June 2022 and observed the exact type of educational option they wanted to bring to Des

5. Evidence of Need and Community Support

Moines. Following the meeting, Dr. Christopher Murphy, Chief Strategic Growth and Communications Officer for Concept Schools joined the founding group.

Through Sunnie and Roger's years of philanthropic work supporting Des Moines, they amassed a wealth of contacts aligned with the general vision of supporting Des Moines youth. The founding group hosted several meetings with interested parties and prospective governing board members in Des Moines August 2022.

Leaders from a variety of organizations attended, including:

- United Way
- CFUM
- Hy-Vee
- IJAG
- Iowa Economic Development
- Starts Right Here
- Drake Neighborhood Association
- Urban Dreams

During these meetings, the founding group shared a brief rationale for introducing a charter school to Des Moines. The response from the attendees was overwhelmingly supportive. Attendees welcomed the idea of a charter school that focused on STEM education and college preparation. Based on their lifelong experiences, the attendees were pivotal in narrowing down the list of potential facilities locations, guiding the founding group towards historically underserved neighborhoods.

5.3. Optional attachment(s) to support 5.1 and 5.2. Please add any additional information or documents

6. Independent Founding Group and Governing Board Background Information

Independent Founding Group Members

"Founding group' means a person, group of persons, or education service provider that develops and submits an application for a charter school to the state board" [Iowa Code § 256E.2(5)].

6.1. Enter the names of the independent founding group members.

- a. Sunnie Richer
- b. Roger Brooks
- c. Dr. Christopher Murphy

Attach the curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé for each founding member. [See Appendix A: Founding Group Resumes](#)

6.2.

Proposed Governing Board Members

"Governing board' means the independent board of a charter school whose members are elected or selected pursuant to the charter school contract" [Iowa Code § 256E.2(6)].

6.3. Enter the names of the proposed governing board members. If not yet known, enter the date when they will be available.

6. Independent Founding Group and Governing Board Background Information

- a. Carrie Bening
- b. Sue Cronin
- c. Jeff Goodman
- d. Christine Hensley
- e. Kittie Weston-Knauer
- f. San Wong

Attach the CV or résumé for each governing board member. [See Appendix B: Governing Board Resumes](#)

6.4.

Proposed Charter School Administration

6.5. Indicate the names of the proposed charter school administration and each individual's role.

Add rows as necessary.

Proposed Administrator Full Name	Role
To be hired after charter approval, before Feb 1, 2023	Principal
To be hired after charter approval, before May 1, 2023	Assistant Principal

The CV or résumé for each administrator are not yet available.

7. Proposed Calendar and Daily Schedule

7.1. Attach a copy of the proposed charter school's calendar that includes:

- School year and semester start and end dates,
- Holidays and other no-school days, and
- Professional learning days.

[See Appendix C: HSADSM Academic Calendar 2023-24 Draft](#)

7.2. Attach a sample of the proposed charter school's daily schedule for one week that includes:

- Daily start and end times,
- Class period or content block start and end times, and
- Name of classes or content to be covered.
- If the proposed charter school wishes to offer grades nine through 12, attach a master schedule and course catalog.

[See Appendix D: Daily Bell Schedule Draft](#)

7.3. Add attachments to [Appendix E](#).

8. Proposed Academic Program

8.1. Describe the proposed charter school's academic program and identify how the program aligns with state academic standards.

The HSADSM educational program model brings together best-practices in math and science education, helping us to achieve our goal of empowering students with high intellectual standards as they prepare for college, careers, and citizenship in the global economy. At Concept, we believe an education rooted in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) best prepares students to be successful in college and careers beyond high school.

Over the past 20 years, Concept Schools has developed its own curriculum that includes summative unit assessments that will be utilized to gauge areas in need of remediation. HSADSM implements a standards-based, college-preparatory curriculum giving the staff flexibility to adapt instructional strategies to meet the needs of the students. Curriculum maps and unit plans provide the framework for the detailed weekly lesson plans that the teachers complete with their grade-level partners. These plans specify the daily activities and assessments that teachers use to teach and measure progress and to ensure that all homework and class work is aligned to Iowa standards.

The HSADSM curriculum is aligned with all Iowa learning standards and meets all state expectations. HSADSM will utilize Iowa state assessments to guide curriculum revisions as needed on a year-to-year basis. All students will receive instruction in all core content areas (English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies). Students will also participate in a rotation of special classes like Physical Education, Art, Music, and Technology.

HSADSM will also administer Northwest Educational Assessments Measures for Academic Progress (MAP) and other relevant assessments to set and monitor individual academic growth goals in reading and math.

Concept Schools Curriculum Directors are instrumental in this process. They create the scope and sequence, guide teachers with the pacing, and select and review the resources. They provide continuous professional development to teachers throughout the school year. Teachers are responsible for collaborating and creating their lesson plans and assessments according to the curriculum provided. Concept Schools Curriculum Directors update and revise the curriculum according to new data, programs, needs, and resources every year. Teachers provide feedback about their experiences with each unit in the curriculum.

Concept network schools take a whole-child approach to learning where all students deserve to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. HSADSM offers parents/guardians and families various opportunities that many students may not have otherwise in traditional public schools. These include a program of learning opportunities to keep our students involved that extend beyond the school day and include, but are not limited to clubs, special interest groups, competition teams, sports programs, trips, cultural events, summer and winter programs, and mentorships.

Key elements of the K-12 Concept educational program include:

- STEM-focused education
- College & Career Readiness Programs
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Support
- Free tutoring, clubs, and sports
- Concept Young Scholars Program (CYSP)
- Concept network-wide programs and events
- Cultural and educational trips
- Summer enrichment programs

HSADSM envisions a more productive and peaceful society by setting high standards for all students to unleash their potential. HSADSM provides more instructional time than traditional public schools, rigorous graduation requirements, and promotion policies, a nurturing school culture, and positive behavioral expectations. We create a culture of learning that translates into success.

HSADSM strategically builds a culture that promotes success and focuses on effort. It is a culture that revolves around relationships with students, families, and the larger community so that everyone is involved in student success.

HSADSM creates a motivating school culture by promoting programs such as:

- Social-emotional learning program
- Research-based positive behavioral intervention system

- Culturally responsive teaching and trauma-informed practices
- Annual staff, parent/guardian, and student surveys
- Data-driven, multi-tiered systems of support approach - to monitor attendance, SEL, behavior data, and activities and to provide interventions aligned to develop students' areas of growth
- Clubs and advanced study teams
- Student assemblies
- Family/Community Events

All Concept network schools like HSADSM provides student-centered learning. HSADSM will feature smaller class sizes and low student-to-teacher ratios compared to many other traditional district schools. Our talented and committed teaching staff provide a personalized educational experience for our students in an environment with a student-centered focus. Using a multitude of data points, the performance of each student is analyzed, and effective strategies are developed to ensure learning is mastered.

HSADSM offers more instructional time in math and science with highly qualified subject expert teachers and promotes cross-discipline, project-based learning, and hands-on extracurricular activities. Its STEM-focused culture encourages curiosity, problem-solving, forward-thinking, and robust literacy, so students can enter college and the world equipped with the 21st-century skills they will need.

Nationally recognized programs such as Project Lead the Way, Gateway, and Launch are part of the Concept model. Interactive science classes, science fairs, math competitions, and robotics and engineering programs give our students a competitive edge and help them pursue college degrees and careers in STEM fields.

Features of HSADSM's STEM-Focused curriculum include:

- Completion of more credits in STEM subjects than the state requirements with 4 credits of science, 4 credits of math, and 1 credit of technology/engineering
- Career Tech Education, Launch, Gateway, and Project Lead the Way programs
- Annual in-school science fair and/or interdisciplinary project fair
- Local, regional, and state-wide competitions in math, science, and technology
- Post-secondary, business/industry, and community partnerships
- Hands-on STEM activities and demonstrations
- STEM Certification

As the number of grade levels increases and enrollment in HSADSM grows, the school will emphasize college and career readiness beginning in middle school grades. Research shows that a college degree can make all the difference. HSADSM will provide various resources to prepare students for ACT/SAT, college applications, scholarships, and career readiness programs.

Beginning in middle school, the College/Career Readiness aspects of HSADSM will include:

- Individualized attention - College counselors provide one-on-one college and career guidance customized for the student's needs and ambitions with a variety of tools and activities
- Concept College Readiness Program that focuses on student preparedness for college throughout high school years
- Assistance with FAFSA and scholarship applications
- Annual college/career fair
- College application tracking system
- College visits
- Internships and apprenticeship programs

HSADSM believes in an equitable approach to learning where each child should have access to relevant and challenging academic experiences and educational resources necessary for success across race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, disability, religion, family background and/or income. The Concept Schools' model ensures all children can achieve their academic potential despite personal, social, and cultural circumstances.

8. Proposed Academic Program

HSDSM supports equity by emphasizing:

- High standards for all students to challenge/support them
- Network-wide Committee to create/implement/evaluate an equity plan and facilitate training
- Progress monitoring of each student subgroups with a focus on narrowing the gaps among them
- Differentiation according to students' levels, interests, and needs
- Free clubs, sports, and tutoring are available to any student
- Collecting feedback and data via student/staff/family surveys
- Ongoing communication with feedback loops with all stakeholders

Concept Schools Curriculum Directors, regional Directors of Teaching and Learning and classroom teachers make up a curriculum committee that reviews state standards, assessments, curriculum, and curriculum resources annually to ensure that all students will be able to be exposed to grade level expectations.

9. Proposed Instructional Model

9.1. Describe the proposed charter school's instructional model that includes:

- **Type of learning environment,**
- **Class size and structure,**
- **Curriculum overview, and**
- **Teaching methods.**

An instructional model is a framework for the proposed instructional design that aligns with the needs of the charter school's prospective student population(s). The description should address all of the following:

- Learning environment is the way instruction will be provided (e.g., face-to-face classroom-based, independent study, online).
- Class size and structure includes the maximum class size, the teacher-to-student ratio, grades served in a particular classroom, etc.
- Curriculum overview includes how teachers will teach the standards, including the particular curriculum (e.g., lessons, instructional materials, teaching techniques, activities).
- Teaching methods include the methods and systems that teachers will use to provide differentiated instruction, remediation, and intervention to meet the needs of all students.

Leaders of HSADSM realize that many of our nation’s public schools located in poverty areas are in crisis. To undertake this challenge and close achievement gaps, the school will personalize education by supporting the development of meaningful, sustained relationships among teachers, students, and parents; set clear, coherent goals and expectations that are well communicated to students and parents; and provide opportunities for students to complete real-life, meaningful projects that students can relate to amongst other personalized activities.

HSADSM will ultimately grow each school year to add grade levels and about 50 students to its enrollment until it graduates its first class in 2033. Kindergarten class sizes will be capped at 20 students, and other grades will be capped at 25. Concept Schools believes that small class sizes led by certified teachers allow for the development of meaningful relationships between students and staff. This translates to a small school feel, where staff and administrators truly become part of the community. HSADSM believes that strong relationships with students and families will lead to academic and social success.

We implement a standards-based, college-preparatory curriculum giving the staff flexibility to adapt instructional strategies to meet the needs of the students. All parts of our curriculum are fully aligned with Iowa State Learning Standards. Curriculum maps and unit plans are developed by Concept Curriculum Directors with support from regional Directors of Teaching and Learning and classroom teachers. This provides the framework for the detailed weekly and daily lesson plans that the teachers complete with their grade-level partners.

Rather than adhering to a single teaching philosophy or instructional model, the design will draw on best practices from the field and research to define a set of core instructional practices. HSADSM teachers will receive regular training from Concept and utilize a unique mix of the following research-based instructional strategies:

- Direct teaching
- Differentiated instruction
- Problem-based learning
- Project-based learning
- Collaborative learning
- Data-driven instruction
- Transformational use of technology

Use of these techniques provides an engaging, dynamic learning environment for students to explore the questions they have about the world and ways to positively contribute to the world around them. We utilize a variety of instructional approaches to teach advanced concepts and thinking skills in mathematics and science, as well as other disciplines.

The HSADSM curriculum is full of structured learning time to meet the state standards and to provide ample opportunity for staff to provide targeted learning support to ensure student success. (The number of weekly minutes for core content is noted below.)

English Language Arts (450 minutes, K-12g)

The study of literature in grades 6-8 encompasses analysis and discussion of the literature of various genres. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the writing process – prewriting, drafting, revision according to standard usage and mechanics, and final copy.

Mathematics (450 minutes, K-12g)

The Middle School’s mathematics curriculum covers the full range of mathematical topics, with a particular emphasis on the use of a variety of strategies in formulating and solving problems. Advanced and accelerated students may complete Algebra I in eighth grade. Mathematics instruction in middle schools include opportunities for appropriate project work; discussion between teacher and students and among students; exposition by the math teacher and practice on mathematical methods.

Science (100 minutes, K-2; 200-225 minutes, 3-12g)

To promote the scientific literacy necessary to function in the 21st century, the Middle School provides the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experimentation and earth

sciences. The inquiry-based approach is an integral part of all science instruction as a place to practice the 5E method and obtain hands-on experience.

Social Studies (100 minutes, K-2; 200-225 minutes, 3-12g)

Social studies at the Middle School challenges students to assess and interpret, and they provide a framework for the development of personal and citizenship responsibilities.

Physical Education and Health (135-150 minutes, K-12g)

The physical education program gives students opportunities to improve their agility, flexibility, strength, endurance, and skills through participation in various activities. The health curriculum stresses the prevention and reduction of health risks. Students are encouraged to make responsible and informed decisions about diet, exercise, safety, sexual activity, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use.

Enrichment and Fine Arts (135-150 minutes, K-12g)

A well-rounded music program offers students a variety of ways to develop their musical talents and interests. Performing ensembles may include chorus, string orchestra, symphonic band, concert band, cadet band, and jazz ensemble.

We believe that students learn art best through creating it and that every child has the potential to be an artist. Our arts program focuses student attention on observation and communication through creative challenges that help our students develop visual-spatial skills and build habits of mind through artistic practices. As they explore a variety of traditional and new media, students build visual literacy skills.

Technology

The middle school technology program continues the interdisciplinary approach introduced in Elementary School to deepen students' knowledge in the domains of Digital Citizenship, Productivity Tools, Media Tools, and Computational Thinking. Courses are available to allow students to begin more specialized study in computer science and digital design. These courses highlight the foundational concepts of computer science, and graphic design and video production, in a manner all students will find accessible and relatable.

The middle and high school curriculum begins with everything you would expect in a college preparatory school—literature and history surveys, biology, chemistry, physics, algebra, calculus, geometry, and foreign language. We also offer our students exceptional educational opportunities and ask them to dig deep, think critically and commit themselves to fully pursuing their intellectual passions both inside and outside the classroom.

Co-curricular programs play a significant role in the culture of the school. Students are engaged in projects and activities before and after school. Our students participate in five main categories of events – clubs, special interest groups, annual school-wide events, field trips, and sports. After school clubs and sports will be facilitated based on student and community interest.

HSADSM will also seek external partnerships with community groups to provide students with rich after-school programming.

Beginning in 5th grade, students will be encouraged to participate in Concept Young Scholars Program (CYSP). CYSP is designed to improve students' academic success, prepare them for college, develop strong character, nurture, and empower students through Personal Development, Community Service, Physical Activities and Educational Adventures.

The structure that CYSP provides students coupled with the nurturing support team of adults builds self-motivated, eager learners who are prepared for the future and ready to lead a successful life.

Students who commit to the CYSP program are engaged in a systematic process that guides, recognizes, and rewards their progress. The program encourages activities such as academic competitions, college trips, and excursions.

9. Proposed Instructional Model

Once students successfully register for the CYSP program, they collaborate with an advisor that assists in planning activities, monitoring progress, and setting goals in the following areas:

- Personal Development
- Community Service
- Physical Fitness
- Educational Adventure

CYSP scholars are the future leaders who build relationships and understand the importance of serving others to inspire action and accomplishment.

- Take ownership of their learning
- Have a deep sense of respect for societal norms
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Engage within their communities
- Demonstrate empathy and compassion
- Effectively communicate verbally and nonverbally
- Adapt and persist when challenged

[For more information, see Appendix E: Sample Curriculum](#)

[For more information, see Appendix F: Curricular Resources](#)

10. Assessment of Student Progress

10.1. Describe how the proposed charter school will use assessments to measure and report student progress on the performance framework.

This should describe how the proposed charter school will administer, analyze, and use assessment results related to the performance framework (see the Charter School Contract Performance Framework section of the guidance).

10. Assessment of Student Progress

HSADSM utilizes a wide variety of ongoing assessments of learning. These assessments and the use of the data from the analysis of such assessments are key components of our school design, which is used by teachers throughout the year to adjust instruction according to student needs. The organizational structure at HSADSM requires teachers to work in teams, plan together for lessons, analyze the data, and develop strategies to help students learn together.

At HSADSM, data-driven decision-making will be put into effect by teacher teams. Professional Learning Community (PLC) type teams meet weekly to discuss student performance (individual and group), academic issues, and how to adjust instruction considering current data. Changes might be made such as reassigning students in tutoring groups or re-teaching material, which students haven't mastered. These teams will be organized around grade levels and will be supported by the AP, Principal, and lead teachers. This practice fosters collegial relationships among the staff members.

HSADSM will utilize assessments such as NWEA-MAP tests to measure learning growth annually. MAP tests provide highly accurate results that we use to:

- Identify the skills and concepts individual students have learned.
- Diagnose instructional needs.
- Monitor academic growth over time.
- Make data-driven decisions at the classroom, school, and district levels.
- Place new students into appropriate instructional programs.

NWEA provides an in-depth analysis of student performance and compares it to the large national data pool. MAP reports provide evidence to determine if students are making expected gains. HSADSM teachers will analyze the data reports from NWEA as grade level teams and develop specific strategies to address data indicators. Teachers will share their analysis and plans with the AP of Academics, who monitors implementation of the plans.

These tests will allow students, teachers, and school administrators to receive immediate feedback, ensuring quick responses. A school using these strategies does not have to wait several weeks, or even an entire summer, for results and tracking over time. Therefore, HSADSM team members will not see failing results, but see red flags for certain students. The HSADSM team will act accordingly to address students' learning deficiencies by offering after school tutoring, Saturday school, and peer tutoring and extra work to address deficiencies.

Teams of HSADSM teachers will review the analysis from the interim assessments and develop specific strategies to address the students' learning deficiencies. This data-driven systematic approach also shifts the focus from teaching to learning, treats teachers as professionals, and fosters collegial relationships among the staff.

The systemic approach to utilizing instructional data to support student learning is part of the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach that HSADSM employs. It is to be expected that all students have various levels of understanding of the core curriculum, and highly skilled teachers, like those at HSADSM, will diagnose abilities based on standards-based formative assessments. Levels of intervention, or tiers, vary in frequency and intensity. The higher the need of support, the higher the tier and frequency of that intervention.

Students will regularly be placed in differentiated learning situations where experiences and/or expectations may vary to ensure that all students are equitably challenged to either attain basic skills, meet standards, or be enriched. Teachers monitor student learning through standards-based assessments and other progress monitoring tools, and as students demonstrate regular mastery of skills, interventions are pulled back, so students are allowed to struggle appropriately.

11. Proposed Identification and Provision of Student Supports

11.1. Describe the proposed charter school's plan for identifying and serving students with disabilities, including but not limited to compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

This should describe the school's service delivery plans and referral process, including related professional development, for students with disabilities. For additional guidance please refer to the Departments webpage at: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/special-education> for guidance specific to Service Delivery Plans visit: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/special-education/special-education-state-guidance/district-developed-service-delivery-plan>. A charter school is eligible for Area Education Agency services based on the address of the main office of operations.

Regardless of ability, all students are encouraged to enroll at HSADSM. Should students require special education services, they will be provided in accordance with federal laws and regulations relating thereto, as well as the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). HSADSM will hire special education staff as needed to meet the needs of its special education students. HSADSM will establish a special education committee including the special education director, special education teacher(s), assistant principal of academics, classroom teachers, and contracted services teachers.

Professional training and development for staff involved with the education of students with disabilities will include the following: referral process to the special education teachers, a child find process, The Child Study Team, development of a student's IEP, implementation of a student's IEP, evaluation of a student's progress toward meeting IEP goals and objectives, meeting reporting requirements to parents, and discipline of students with disabilities. The Child Study Team, a team of Special education teacher(s) and classroom teachers, will meet at least once in a month with classroom teacher, will address the classroom teachers' concerns and will provide support to classroom teachers.

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities will be educated in regular classrooms with a non-disabled student. Special classes, separate schooling, or another removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment will occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity with students in the regular education program to participate in and where appropriate, receive credit for non-academic, extracurricular, and ancillary programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities will receive the same notices concerning school-sponsored programs, activities, and services as other students. Such programs, services, and activities include, but are not limited to art and music, counseling services, health services, transportation, recess and physical education, field trips and other recreational activities, school-sponsored clubs, or groups, etc.

A student suspected of having a disability will be referred in writing to the special education teacher (or designee) for an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services after successful implementation of MTSS. The school must demonstrate its efforts to support student learning and to monitor learning. When tiered interventions prove unsuccessful for an extended period, conversations about more targeted goal support through an IEP may be explored.

Any professional staff member of the school may make referrals. Such referrals will: (1) state the reasons for the referral and include any test results, records, or reports upon which the referral is based, if any, (2) describe any attempts to remediate the student's performance prior to the referral, including any supplementary aids or support services provided for this purpose, if any, and (3) describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral. A copy of such a referral, along with the procedural safeguards notice described in Federal Law, will be sent to the student's parents.

When necessary, HSADSM will coordinate with the local Area Education Agency for services and support for types of intervention, special education evaluations and reevaluations to ensure all aspects of the law are met.

11. Proposed Identification and Provision of Student Supports

11.2. Describe the proposed charter school's plan for identifying and serving English learners, including but not limited to compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

This should summarize the school's Lau plan and use of the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA). For additional guidance please refer to the Departments webpage at: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/learner-supports/english-learners-el>

In accordance with state and federal law, HSADSM will support English Language Learners (ELL) through its ELL programming. The ELL program will be evaluated each year to ensure that staff are adequately prepared to meet the needs of diverse language learners.

The ELL program at HSADSM provides students with the opportunity to reach proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English. These goals are promoted in a respectful environment in which the students' first languages and cultures are valued and pride is maintained in their ethnic heritages.

The ELL program addresses its goals through several approaches that are developmentally flexible dependent upon student age and level of English language proficiency and in keeping with the recommended best practices in ELL instruction. The ELL program implements specific teaching strategies and when appropriate utilizes native language tutoring. Students who speak a language other than English follow all normal school enrollment procedures with these additions.

Families registering children are assisted in completing documents and registration materials on site as needed. Every attempt is made to utilize native language interpreters as are available to assist in registration. Other data may be used to potentially identify students in need of ELL services, including:

- Student records
- Teacher interviews
- Parents information
- Teachers' observation
- Referrals
- Student grades
- Informal observations
- Standardized assessments

All families are asked to complete a Home Language Survey during registration. The Home Language Survey is available in both English and Spanish. If other languages are needed, staff can access additional resources from TransACT, an educational service provider. HSADSM is prepared to conduct oral and native language interviews in the student's home in Spanish with those adults who may not have sufficient English or literacy skills to complete a survey in English. If there is a need for other languages, every attempt is made to find competent adults in the community to assist or HSADSM will utilize language line phone services.

The Home Language Survey

STUDENT NAME: _____ PLEASE ANSWER ALL THREE QUESTIONS

HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY (Yes or No, and Mark Language)

Does an adult in the household speak a language other than English at home? Yes No

Does the child you are registering speak a language other than English at home? Yes No

What was the first language your child learned? English (E) Another Language (A)

Both English & Another Language (B) Language(s) Learned: _____

Home Language Surveys are included in the enrollment packet for all students.

If a family indicates a language other than English on the Home Language Survey, or there are other indicators of ELL need, ELL teachers will be notified. The ELL teacher facilitates the identification process, and a copy of the Home Language Survey is filed in the student's cumulative folder.

The student is placed at the grade level appropriate for his or her age, unless there are extenuating circumstances, which will be considered on an individual basis. Teachers and staff will assess the student's academic skills in relation to his or her grade and age level. Once placed, teachers will differentiate learning experiences to ensure that ELL students meet grade-level expectations.

The levels of support ELL students receive is determined by assessment data. Students who are shown to be in pre-production, early-production, or speech emergence or intermediate fluency in English skills are placed appropriately to assist their continued English acquisition.

According to the Iowa Department of Education and Iowa English Language Proficiency Standards, current and former ELL student's performance is monitored to ensure that s/he is continuing to be successful without direct ELL support.

HSADSM students with limited proficiency in English will achieve proficiency using our school's services and teaching methods. HSADSM will hire ESL certified teachers as needed and adapt staffing according to the student population. HSADSM will ensure that ELL (English Language Learner) students are not excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction. Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive notices and information from the school in their native language so that HSADSM can encourage the participation of all parents in the HSADSM community. HSADSM teachers will also be responsible for observing each student throughout the day with an eye toward detecting limited English proficiency. Students suspected of having limited English proficiency will be tested to determine if and what level of services, are necessary.

HSADSM will educate ELL students following a model of English language transitional bilingual education and language immersion. We will provide all staff that works with ELL students using specialized curricular materials to enable ELL students to achieve proficiency.

We will also directly provide or make referrals to appropriate support services that may be needed by ELL students to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. Such services may include individual counseling, group counseling, home visits, and parental counseling.

Proficiency in the English language of an ELL student will be measured at least once in every semester utilizing standardized assessment tools to determine whether continued special services are warranted. The school will also evaluate each student's performance in academic content areas to measure the student's progress in core subjects. If an ELL student fails to show appropriate progress in these academic areas as measured by administered diagnostic assessment and teacher assessment of classroom work, modifications to the instructional program may be made for individual students. In addition, HSADSM will look at disaggregated data for ELL students as a group to evaluate whether these students are acquiring the English language and progressing in core subjects. This data will provide information as to whether broader program modifications are necessary and/or additional professional development needs to be provided to our teaching staff.

In terms of curricular accommodations, our main concern is to help ELL students to access the content of the class curriculum by providing direct linguistic support through glossaries, dictionaries, computerized instruction, additional support services, bilingual paraprofessionals, modified textbooks, etc.

However, we also provide professional development to our teachers on how they can make accommodations for ELL students in their everyday classroom (these are effective strategies for non-ELLs as well):

- Adjust speech rate and enunciation. While English is a stress-timed language, many other languages, including Spanish, are syllable-timed languages. English tends to stress one or two syllables and slur the rest of the word or sentence. This means that English sounds are often unclear to some speakers of other languages. Thus, pronouncing equally stressed words or sentences may increase students' comprehension along with adjusted speech rate.

11. Proposed Identification and Provision of Student Supports

- Introduce key vocabulary words. Teachers can help students build academic background knowledge by teaching key vocabulary words. One strategy is to have students describe the terms rather than define them. For instance, “civil war” can be described in relation to time, people, and events.
- Use visual aids. As Iowa State Learning Standards are heavily loaded with context- and culture-embedded information, the quickest way to help ELLs build background knowledge is to show pictures and instructional video clips. In using instructional video clips, provide an anticipation guide before showing it.
- Provide information or directions to tasks in oral and written forms. For instance, write down key concepts and vocabulary while you are explaining them verbally.
- Connect students' prior knowledge to new knowledge. What ELLs already know can be very different from what native English-speaking students know. Provide opportunities for students to share stories from their own families (e.g., oral history projects). From these stories, many important social studies concepts will emerge. This also is a way of showing how much we value ELL students' cultures and histories.
- Break down information, including directions, into sequential steps when presenting it. Lengthy directions can be confusing. Provide steps to follow, preferably with bulleted points.
- Use less text-dense instructional materials. Text-dense texts and handouts can overwhelm students and discourage them from learning. Use graphic organizers that explain or introduce events and relations of events as much as possible. Modified texts also can be used as a tool to provoke discussions and critical thinking.
- Teach learning strategies. Students need to learn how to use text features such as titles, subheadings, illustrations, tables, and graphs to gain information and make predictions. In addition, it is important to model how to present, discuss, summarize, and so forth.
- Create heterogeneous group work. Group work is particularly critical because it increases students' interaction time and may be less intimidating than working alone. Therefore, ELLs are more likely to take a risk and speak out.
- Pair an ELL with an advanced ELL student (possibly with the same native language). Newcomers especially can benefit from this type of buddy system. Assigning buddies specific roles can increase effectiveness.
- Think like a linguist. Be mindful of and analyze the languages that teachers are using in the classroom as well as those that exist in the text and instructional materials. This will help teachers also adjust their speech and texts to make them more comprehensible.
- Think like an outsider. School and academic functions are cultural practices. The idea of thinking like an outsider will enable teachers to see what they have taken for granted and assumed that ELLs already know.
- Coordinate common plan time amongst the ELL student’s teachers. This is as much an administrative issue as it is a pedagogical one. Administrators must be made to understand the value of continual collaboration as opposed to one-shot professional development.
- Discuss ELL students' weaknesses, strengths, and progress.
- Share the goals of each unit, instructional handouts, and assignment tasks. By doing so, ESL teachers will be able to provide more responsive instruction in their ELL class that can support the work of content-area teachers.

ELL students have full access to appropriate curricula taught by qualified teachers using appropriate instructional resources that match students' language and grade level. Serving the needs of this growing population and helping them succeed academically is the professional and civic responsibility of all teachers. If we are not able to meet young immigrants' needs, we risk losing their generation's energy and brilliance.

Among the accommodations available to English-learners during standardized testing include word-to-word translations from English into a student's native language and frequent breaks during testing. Decisions about accommodations for English-learners may be made by more than one individual, and may include ELL and bilingual teachers, content-area teachers, guidance counselors, principals, parents, and students, among others. These same stakeholders should also decide on and assign test accommodations to English-learners early in the academic year or upon enrollment, the recommendations say, and no student should encounter an accommodation for the first time on test day.

11. Proposed Identification and Provision of Student Supports

11.3. Describe the proposed charter school's plan for identifying and serving gifted and talented students, including but not limited to compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

This should summarize the school's gifted and talented plan. For additional guidance please refer to the Departments webpage at: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/advanced-learning-opportunities/gifted-talented>

As introduced in Section 10 of this applications, HSADSM takes a systematic and data-driven approach to teaching and learning within the classroom, or Tier 1, setting. One aspect of MTSS is that HSADSM teachers assess student levels of understanding at the beginning of instructional units with standards-based assessments designed in collaboration with Concept Schools.

Again, it is to be expected that all students have various levels of understanding of the core curriculum, and highly skilled teachers, like those at HSADSM, diagnose abilities based on standards-based formative assessments. If students demonstrate their proficiency on various learning standards, their learning experiences will be differentiated- providing them with extension and enrichment learning opportunities.

As students age into Middle School, students may be placed in advanced classes where some middle school students may earn high school credits by taking advanced mathematics or English language arts classes. Across the Concept network, many high school students are placed in college level courses while in high school through programs like Advanced Placement and Dual Credit.

In addition to enriching students' academic experiencing, HSADSM will introduce Concept Schools Young Scholars Program (CYSP).

CYSP prepares 5-12th grade students to become well-rounded individuals. This unique program guides, recognizes, and rewards progress and allows students to build character while strengthening their resumes and preparing them for future careers.

CYSP accomplishes this through emphasizing four core areas:

- Personal development
- Voluntary public service
- Physical fitness
- Expedition & exploration

CYSP students are partnered with a mentor to help guide and enrich their personal development. All students are encouraged to participate in CYSP, however, it is his or her own responsibility to persevere through the program to truly become enriched.

11.4. Describe the proposed charter school's plan for identifying and serving students who are failing academically or are below grade level, including but not limited to compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

This should describe the school's plan for identification and support for students:

- That do not meet benchmark on screening assessments,
- Are not proficient on statewide assessments,
- Have failing grades, and/or
- Are chronically absent.

For additional guidance please refer to the Departments webpage at: <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/learner-supports/risk>

11. Proposed Identification and Provision of Student Supports

HSADSM anticipates serving a large population of at-risk learners, i.e. students who are behind their age-group peers in academic skills. As described previously, HSADSM will identify students' learning deficiencies through regular assessments. HSADSM will extend learning opportunities to all students by providing an engaging and effective curriculum and instructional program and differentiating instruction to meet learners at all levels. For those who need extra help beyond the regular school program, HSADSM will offer after-school tutoring, Saturday school, peer tutoring and extra work to address deficiencies.

As described above, HSADSM values personalized education for all students. This is possible by implementing Multi-Systems of Support: Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are layers of structured support that are managed by staff. RTI is a data-driven process by which students that are not meeting academic standards are identified, supported, and progress-monitored. PBIS is a school-wide approach to teaching positive behaviors that are regularly reinforced.

In both cases, as needs arise, additional layers of support (tiered interventions) are added to an individual student's schedule to ensure that his or her needs are met. These interventions are identified as teams that include staff and families, and they are put in place for set lengths of time. After a length of time (usually some number of weeks), the team will review progress and depending upon how a student responds to the intervention, the team may recommend increasing the intensity, frequency, or type of intervention a student receives. Should a student not respond to a series of interventions, that student may or may not be recommended for further evaluation through the lens of special education.

12. Proposed Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Programs

12.1. Describe the proposed charter school's co-curricular and extracurricular programs, including how the programs will be funded and delivered.

Co-curricular and extracurricular programs are not required to be offered.

12. Proposed Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Programs

Co-curricular programs play a significant role in the culture of the school. Students are engaged in projects and activities before and after school. HSADSM students will participate in five main categories of events – clubs, special interest groups, annual school-wide events, field trips, and sports.

School-wide assemblies and field trips will be collaboratively chosen by teachers and administrators, and they will be aligned with grade level content or school goals. As such, the school will be responsible for those costs through its general fund.

During its first two years, HSADSM will establish meaningful partnerships with Des Moines community organizations and programs to provide after-school care for students. While the school will provide adequate school space to safely encourage care, costs will be left to families.

Beginning in 3rd grade, students will be required to do a science project for the HSADSM Science Fair, working individually or in small teams. The annual Science Fair will be a major event for the school. Professionals in scientific fields will be invited to the school, and students will go on field trips focused on science education and careers, for example to science labs at local colleges and universities or manufacturing industries. The best science fair projects done by will be presented at the annual Concept Science & Engineering Fair. In the past, CONSEF has been held in Cleveland, OH, and it will be held in Chicago, IL in April 2023.

Advanced academic clubs and enrichment opportunities such as Robotics Club, Codeathon, Spoken Word, Fine Arts Competitions, Math Club, and STEM Expo will also be offered. Concept Schools has had a long relationship with programs like FIRST Robotics, VEX Robotics, and HSADSM students will be encouraged to participate.

Additional co-curricular and extracurricular programs will be offered based on the interest of students, staff, and the community. HSADSM will leverage grant opportunities and its general fund for financing the initial setup of these programs with the intention of not bringing any cost to families whenever possible.

13. Proposed Student Recruitment

13.1. Describe the proposed charter school's plan and timeline(s) for recruiting, enrolling, and transferring students, including information about any enrollment preferences and procedures for conducting transparent admissions selections.

This should describe how information related to enrollment and lottery policies will be publicly available and provided to the targeted community(ies).

To best engage parents and inform the community about the transformation process at HSADSM, Concept will adopt aspects of its current model for opening new charter schools and student recruitment.

Student admission process will include five stages: holding information distribution and open houses, reviewing enrollment packets, conducting a lottery (as needed), conducting home visits (when possible), and arranging enrollment meetings.

Information Distribution and Open Houses

Information about HSADSM and the enrollment process will be disseminated throughout the city via a variety of methods. This includes direct outreach to parents, teachers, pediatricians, counselors, social service agencies, and other youth agencies/advocacy institutions. At open houses, prospective students and their parents/guardians will hear a comprehensive presentation about our school. There will be an opportunity to discuss the school's academic program, the schedule for an extended school day and year, and expectations for student behavior and parental involvement.

Interested parents who are unable to attend one of the HSADSM open house meetings will be provided with a packet of written materials covering all topics formally discussed at the open house, and a meeting scheduled with appropriate school staff for interested parties to verbally review all materials and receive answers to outstanding questions. Prospective students and parents will be encouraged to visit the school both during and after school hours.

HSADSM will vigorously disseminate announcements to the public through print and digital marketing efforts including:

- Posting and distributing flyers in neighborhoods surrounding the school
- Ads / Placements
- Brochures
- Email blasts and social media campaigns
- Posters
- Visiting public and private elementary schools, after-school programs, youth and community centers, and business and civic organizations in the school community
- Utilizing local news and media resources (print and otherwise)
- Posting information on the school website
- Disseminating materials door-to-door,
- Presence at community events-churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues
- Direct bulk-mailings to focused on families with students in target grades
- Visiting youth and community centers and business and civic organizations

HSADSM will use all the methods described above to help ensure that students of all races, languages, disabilities, and abilities learn about the opportunities offered to children by our charter school. HSADSM will not discriminate against any students or employees based on their intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, national origin, religion, or on any other ground that would be unlawful. All HSADSM literature regarding student enrollment will include a statement expressing this fact.

Enrollment Forms

Interested parents will be asked to complete and submit enrollment form; forms will be available at the school, at HSADSM open houses, online on the school's website, and at locations throughout the community. The form will request basic information such as name, parent or guardian name and contact information. School staff members and computers will be available to any parent who needed help completing enrollment forms.

Lottery

If the number of eligible enrollment forms exceeds the spaces available for students, a random lottery will be held. Such lottery will be open to the public and attended and/or audited by a representative of an unaffiliated outside organization. Siblings of enrolled students will have the preference for available spaces and will be the only students given preference in the lottery. If necessary, the initial lottery will be held before June 2023.

13. Proposed Student Recruitment

Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level if vacancies occur. The random lottery process used for student admission also will serve to place students in preferential order on these waiting lists. Whenever a vacancy occurs, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during that school year, the school will contact the parent or guardian of the student next on the appropriate waiting list.

Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the family of the student on the top of the waiting list and receive confirmation of whether the student still wants to enroll at HSADSM before proceeding to the next name on the list. If such attempts to contact the student's parents are unsuccessful, the school may remove that student from the waiting list. The school shall maintain documentation of the attempts made to contact the parents of any student removed from the waiting list. Waiting lists will not be carried over from year to year; rather the waiting list for each year will be derived from the random lottery.

Once enrolled at HSADSM, students will not go through a lottery process again. However, each year they will complete re-enrollment forms indicating their intention to stay at HSADSM for the next school year. Deadline for the re-enrollment will be close to the application deadline for new students. The re-enrollment deadline will be communicated to parents in different forms and multiple times to ensure that they are informed about the deadline. Communication will include letters sent home, newsletters, phone calls, meetings with students, and announcements.

Home Visits

Concept Schools values the relationships it forms with its parents, and one of the best ways to establish and maintain positive relationships with parents is to meet with them on their schedule, in their homes. HSADSM will conduct home visits to personalize the intentions of HSADSM and to listen to the needs of parents. HSADSM intends to not only serve its students, but it intends to provide opportunities and social supports that meet the community and student needs.

Most Concept-managed schools expect each staff member to conduct at least 8 home visits throughout the school year, and while it has yet to be determined, HSADSM will set a similar expectation for its staff for the upcoming school year and beyond.

Enrollment Meetings

After admission into the school, students and parents will be encouraged to meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal. These meetings may take place in their home or at school. The purpose of this meeting is to provide upfront communication with the student and their parents to explain the HSADSM educational program and possible opportunities such as, after-school opportunities, expectations, promotion policy, advanced study groups, local and international trips, tutoring and all other programs. In the meetings, families will be asked to sign the Student and Parent Commitment Letters, which clearly explain all the details of the school's academic and non-academic policies.

14. Proposed Code of Student Conduct

14.1. Describe the charter school's proposed code of student conduct, including procedures and disciplinary sanctions for both general education and special education students.

This should describe the proposed charter school's philosophy of student discipline, including:

- Which student actions will result in discipline,
- How discipline practices and procedures will be monitored to ensure legal and policy compliance,
- The appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion, and
- How the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings.

HSADSM recognizes that the success of students is dependent upon the school's ability to create a culture that fosters meaningful and sustained relationships between teachers, students, and parents. We will create a school culture that is built on success, respect, and accountability. HSADSM will be very intentional about building this culture from the point of first contact with families and throughout students' academic experiences.

To help parents evaluate enrolling their children at HSADSM, the school's goals, values, expectations, programs, and services will be communicated to parents and students so they clearly understand what will be offered and what it will take to succeed. HSADSM promotes six core values:

- Respect – All members of the HSADSM community have equal worth and should be treated with respect
- Responsibility – All people have choices, and teachers, parents, and students should be responsible for their actions
- Integrity – Belonging to a community requires a commitment to the common good. The community is stronger when everyone can be counted upon to be honest and trustworthy
- Courage – Having the courage to try new things expands minds and provides opportunities to exceed his or her own expectations
- Curiosity – The ability to wonder and to create connections stimulates further learning. At HSADSM, inquiry will be fostered on the part of parents, staff, and students
- Effort – Success is accomplished when students, family, and staff are willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish their vision of the future

These core values are central to the hiring process at HSADSM. Staff are expected to exemplify these values in their professional and personal lives. Teachers and staff will be expected to model these core values in all behaviors inside and outside the classroom. These core values provide students with the opportunity for self-improvement, individual growth, and character development.

They define the rules and behavioral expectations for students. Students will be expected to encourage their peers to adhere to these values and school authorities will manage student conduct according to these values. Conduct which disrupts learning or threatens to disrupt the operation of the school, which interferes with the rights and privileges of students or other citizens, which endangers the health, safety or welfare of any person, or which damages property will not be tolerated.

HSADSM students will self-assess their understanding of and adherence to the core values on a regular basis. Each teacher will also regularly assess students on the core values and provide feedback to students and families.

Below are how students may demonstrate HSADSM values:

- Respect:
 - Interacts with peers and adults in a courteous, respectful manner
 - Demonstrates appropriate body language, tone of voice, and word choice
 - Accepts feedback in a constructive manner; does not “talk back”
 - Does not willfully and purposefully ignore directions
- Responsibility
 - Accepts feedback from others
 - Assumes ownership of actions
 - Takes steps to improve self/grades/behavior based upon feedback.
 - Comes prepared for class - has all materials (books, paper, pens and homework)
- Courage
 - Takes risks with their learning in class
 - Makes good decisions in the face of pressure and adversity from peers and others
- Integrity
 - Being truthful in words and actions
 - Practices academic honesty
 - Do as you say and saying as you do
 - Does the right thing regardless of circumstance

- Curiosity
 - Demonstrates an eagerness to learn
 - Explores and question things to gain a deeper understanding in class and after school
- Effort
 - Consistently gives best effort to academic work
 - Participates in the community with positive effort and attitude

The Principal and Assistant Principal of School Culture (APSC) will take ownership of establishing a positive culture at HSADSM and monitor and support student behavior. They will establish routines and protocols following the Positive Behaviors, Interventions, and Supports (PBIS) model, which all Concept-managed schools incorporate. HSADSM believes that to be successful, students not only need to be explicitly taught rigorous academics, but also the social-emotional skills required to navigate this ever-changing global society. The APSC will conduct regular behavior management cycles to provide explicit feedback to teachers on mutually agreed upon behavioral standards in key areas: classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and during entrance/exit routines. Expectations will also be shared with parents during informal and formal meetings beginning during the enrollment season.

Like academics, behaviors are monitored and supported through an MTSS approach. Behavior data, attendance, and values assessment data is regularly reviewed by staff, and should students require additional, targeted, tiered supports, they will be provided to ensure that all students are able to meet school wide behavior expectations.

Establishing and maintaining a positive school culture

A positive school culture that is safe and secure for all students to be challenged and enriched is the hallmark of a high-quality school. At HSADSM, we value a safe and orderly school and classroom environment and effective recruitment, attendance, and discipline policies.

As a part of the Concept-model, students will wear uniforms, and during the first few weeks of school, the Principal and APSC will conduct grade-level and all-school assemblies to share academic and behavior expectations and goals. Throughout the year, assemblies will occur to share progress towards meeting these goals. Admittedly these assemblies will cut into instructional time, HSADSM believes that the overall value of reinforcing expectations will more than compensate in the classroom. Structure, routines, and a transparent and consistent behavior management system involving administration and teachers will produce a positive school culture.

Taking proactive action against adversity

To establish a positive school culture, HSADSM will engage parents in conversations about the desired HSADSM culture. Feedback will be incorporated in setting clear and consistent expectations for all. This is just the first example of how HSADSM intends to take proactive action against adversity.

During its first enrollment season, HSADSM will conduct community walks through the neighborhoods nearest the school. HSADSM will provide literature about the turnaround project with the desired outcome of increasing awareness, establishing relationships and partnerships, and increase student enrollment. As students are enrolled, members of HSADSM will conduct home visits to personalize the intentions of HSADSM and to listen to the needs of parents and families. HSADSM intends to not only serve its students, but it intends to provide opportunities and social supports that meet the community and student needs.

At HSADSM, each grade level will plan and implement regularly scheduled parent-focused events centered on supporting community social needs or promoting the turnaround efforts of HSADSM.

Setting and progress-monitoring goals

To attain any level of success, one must fully comprehend the expected outcomes and monitor progress towards achieving those goals. HSADSM promotes aggressive, transparent goals for the school, teams, and individuals. To begin the school year, HSADSM will streamline aspects of its academic model to provide opportunities to assess student learning and set clear goals in both reading and math and to clearly articulate and establish behavior expectations for all.

14. Proposed Code of Student Conduct

A clear and consistent system for staff performance will be introduced during the staff in-service weeks preceding the start of the school year. Staff members will be provided feedback on their performance in their roles throughout the school year, and they will be provided support and guidance in expected areas in large or small group, or individual settings.

As mentioned above, school administrators will conduct regular behavior management cycles throughout the school to best identify areas of strength and growth. Targeted supports will be provided to individuals or groups depending upon the varied needs.

Sharing responsibility for success

Through a collaborative community-based approach towards the success of HSADSM, a collective responsibility will be fostered. HSADSM will conduct regularly scheduled community outreach and engagement meetings throughout the school year. These meetings will provide opportunities to build the community's awareness of the collective vision and mission of HSADSM, to share the learning and behavioral expectations for all students, and for community leaders to share opportunities and programs that align with the school's mission.

Schools within the Concept network collaborate periodically throughout the school to discuss student conduct and protocols and practices. Most have similar student/parent handbooks that outline these expectations. Appendix G comes from Gateway Science Academy of St. Louis, MO.

[For more information, see Appendix G: Sample Parent-Student Handbook](#)

15. Proposed Organizational Structure

15.1. Describe the proposed charter school's organizational structure. For each position or group in the organizational chart, list the duties and powers.

This should include the position or group titles and, if available, may list specific names.

[Attach a copy of the organizational chart. See Appendix H: Organizational Structure](#)

15.2. Describe the delineation of authority and reporting between the governing board, staff, and any other related bodies or external organizations that play a role in managing the charter school.

The delineation of authority is a matter of local determination, as long as the delineation is clear and unambiguous.

Governance of HSADSM is the responsibility of the school board. The governing board (board) will hold and be responsible for the charter with the Authorizer, the Iowa Department of Education. The board will provide oversight and accountability in the management of the school, including financial oversight exercised by review of financial updates at each meeting. The board will protect the public interest and uphold the public trust by applying the highest standards of service in governing the school according to its bylaws, the charter contract, and relevant state and federal statutes. Key responsibilities of the HSADSM board include assessing the performance of the school and evaluating the school's Charter Management Organization (CMO). Among other duties, the CMO will track data on school performance, which is submitted by HSADSM administration; the board will review data to ensure the school is accountable for meeting its performance goals. The Board of Directors of HSADSM will evaluate the performance of its CMO, Concept Schools, on an annual basis.

[For more information, see Appendix I: CMO Evaluation Rubric Draft](#)

As detailed in Appendix G, except for those obligations and duties that are specifically reserved to HSADSM or its Governing Authority, Concept Schools, subject to the supervision of the HSADSM Board as outlined in the management agreement, has the responsibility for and is required to take actions to perform the obligations needed to operate HSADSM as an Iowa charter public school.

Concept assigns Superintendent to ensure the successful implementation of the Concept model. The superintendent oversees the school principal and major school business operations. The superintendent may represent the board in front of its charter authorizer, the state department of education and any other parties. The superintendent shall report to the board and regarding managerial duties shall report to Concept Schools. The superintendent shall always act in the best interest of the school in any case. The superintendent will attend regular board meetings to account to HSADSM for the roles and responsibilities of Concept. The superintendent will evaluate the principal by using the evaluation protocol developed by Concept Schools. In turn, the board will evaluate the superintendent as part of the annual CMO evaluation.

The superintendent and treasurer are compensated by an education service provider (Concept Schools) and are prohibited from serving as a voting member on the governing board unless the State Board waives such prohibition.

The HSADSM board will hire and oversee the school principal to ensure effective and transparent management of the school's operations and provide vision and leadership to the school. The principal will serve as both the educational and business leader of the school. The principal will report to the superintendent and the board. An annual review of the principal's performance will be carried out by Concept Schools, which will send the results of the review to the board. The board makes final decisions regarding the principal's employment. It is the duty of the principal to provide general oversight including hiring and evaluating staff, oversee finances, promote the HSADSM mission, establish HSADSM policies, and develop community partnerships.

[For additional information, please see Appendix J: Principal Evaluation Rubric Draft](#)

The governing board of HSADSM is ultimately responsible for the charter. Upon selection, the board will sign a management agreement with Concept to manage the academics, finances, and operations of the school. The board consists of a diverse group of community leaders with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, with the responsibility of providing oversight and accountability in the management of the school.

The governing board has all the following specific powers, not to supersede any powers enumerated in Iowa Code § 256E:

- To elect and remove Principals
- To select and remove Officers, agents, and employees; to prescribe powers and duties for them, and to fix their compensation
- To conduct, manage and control the affairs and activities, and to make rules and regulations

- To enter contracts, leases and other agreements which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary or desirable in obtaining the purposes of promoting the interests of the Corporation
- To carry on the business of operating a charter school
- To acquire real or personal property, by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, or otherwise, and to hold, improve, lease, sublease, mortgage, transfer in trust, encumber, convey, or otherwise dispose of such property
- To borrow money, incur debt, and to execute and deliver promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations and other evidence of debt and securities
- To lend money received only from private sources and to accept conditional or unconditional promissory notes, therefore, whether interest or non-interest bearing, or secured or unsecured
- To indemnify and maintain insurance on behalf of any of its Directors, Officers, employees, or agents for liability asserted against or incurred by such person in such capacity or arising out of such person's status as such, subject to the provisions of the Iowa laws and the limitations noted in the Code of Regulations

Board meetings will be held at the school or at any other reasonably convenient place as the board may designate. An annual meeting will be held in the month of July (or earlier) of each year for the purpose of electing members, making, and receiving reports on corporate affairs, and transacting such other business as comes before the meeting. Regular meetings will be held throughout the year for at least six times a year. A majority of the members present at a meeting, whether a quorum, may adjourn the meeting to another time and place. A schedule of board meetings, agendas, minutes, and annual budgets will be posted on the school's website.

Action by the board without a meeting shall occur only as permitted by the Open Meetings Act. In all events, a quorum of members must be physically present to lawfully conduct a Board Meeting of the charter school. Once a quorum is physically present, additional Directors may participate in a Board meeting through use of video-conferencing equipment to the extent permitted by law, so long as all Directors participating in such meeting can hear one another and there is no objection from any Director.

The board officers consist of a Board President (the Chair), Vice President (Vice Chair), and a Secretary. The board also may have such other officers, as the board deems advisable. Subject to board control, the Chair has general supervision, direction, and control of the affairs of the Corporation, and such other powers and duties as the board may prescribe. He/She shall have authority to sign all deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, notes, and other instruments requiring his/her signature; and shall have all the powers and duties prescribed by the General Corporation Act. When present, the Chair shall preside at board meetings. If the Chair is absent or disabled, the Vice Chair shall perform all the Chair's duties and, when so acting, shall have all the Chair's powers and be subject to the same restrictions. The Vice Chair shall have other such powers and perform such other duties as the Board may prescribe. The Secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of all meetings of the board and any board committees.

The Board will protect the public interest and uphold the public trust by applying the highest standards of service in governing the school according to its bylaws, the charter contract, and relevant state and federal statutes. It is the duty of the governing board to:

- Provide general oversight – Overall responsibility for management of the school to include approval of all staff hired
- Oversee finances – Establish fiscal policy and boundaries, approve the budget, exercise financial controls, and review and approve major expenditures. The board will exercise their fiduciary responsibility to ensure that there are adequate resources for the school
- Promote the school's mission – Advocate for HSADSM by promoting its mission and goals not only within the school environment but also within the larger community
- Identify and supervise the principal – Identify and supervise the school principal mutually with Concept to provide vision and leadership to the school
- Establish the school policies – Develop and approve all policies and monitor implementation of the same. The board also will engage in long-range strategic planning
- Assesses the performance of the school – Use internal and external accountability tools to assess performance goals of school
- Develop and approve the school's strategic plan

15. Proposed Organizational Structure

- Develop community partnerships – As appropriate, board members will respond to opportunities to make personal and organizational resources and talents available for the benefit of the school
- Engage and evaluate Concept Schools – holding the CMO accountable for school performance

16. Proposed Staffing Plan

16.1. Attach proposed charter school's staffing chart for the first year of operation:

[See Appendix K: Proposed Staffing Plan](#)

16.2. Describe the proposed charter school's staffing plan for the duration of the charter school contract.

This should include how staffing needs will be analyzed and addressed over the duration of the contract and how compliance with licensure requirements through the Board of Educational Examiners will be achieved.

The proposed grade levels and enrollment of HSADSM will increase each year of its charter agreement, adding 50 students per grade level each school year. HSADSM would ultimately serve at least 640 students across grades K-12 beginning in Fall 2032.

In year one, the school will serve 190 students in Kindergarten through third grade. In Year 2, 3rd grade students will roll up to 4th grade, adding two sections and 50 students to the total enrollment. In Year 3, 5th grade (+50 students) will be added, and so on.

Each year that a grade level is added, two classroom teachers will be added to the staff. Office, administrative, and student services staff will increase periodically throughout the charter term to best support student needs.

This plan is outlined in [Appendix K: Proposed Staffing Plan](#). The years of the charter term are color-coded and indicated with an asterisk.

17. Proposed Recruitment and Development of Administration, Staff, and Governing Board

17.1. Describe how the proposed charter school will recruit and develop school administrators, staff, and governing board members.

This should describe information, such as:

- Recruitment policies;
- How open positions will be advertised in the community(ies);
- Ongoing professional learning that will be provided to administrators, staff, and governing board members; and
- Plans for mentoring and induction for [teachers](#) and [administrators](#).

HSADSM will conduct thorough and comprehensive recruitment process. HSADSM will spend a considerable amount of time on administrator and teacher recruitment and hire teachers that will further the mission and vision of HSADSM. Open positions will be posted on the school website, through national teacher recruitment sites, such as Applitrack and ZipRecruiter, Indeed, and Iowa REAP. A comprehensive recruitment process may include online screening tests, written answers to a list of questions, formal in-person interview, reference check, and demo teachings. An employee referral policy will also help us recruit teachers of high quality.

HSADSM will offer a competitive and performance-based compensation system. HSADSM teachers will have opportunities to receive extra compensations based on high-performance, significant improvement in the student achievement, test scores, and undertaking additional responsibilities and duties.

Teacher retention is essential to maintaining school culture and the overall effectiveness of the school. Factors that positively affect teacher retention that HSADSM will emphasize include:

- Professional development plan - in addition to any job-embedded professional development provided by Concept Schools, the HSADSM professional development program will include a tuition reimbursement policy to help our teacher pursue higher education opportunities
- Staff Surveys - Employee morale is part of school culture, and it is very important. When teachers are happy, they tend to be more efficient, and they enjoy their work. HSADSM will survey its teachers twice a year and receive feedback on teacher needs and morale. Based on staff feedback and needs, HSADSM will organize events to boost employee motivation and morale.
- Staff empowerment - HSADSM ensures that teachers are part of the decision-making process. The team-oriented organizational structure fosters collegial relationships and enables teachers to be involved in decisions. Staff may decide how to use certain funds for extra resources, support materials, staff gatherings, bonuses, etc. In such effort of empowering teachers, HSADSM will organize staff retreats to discuss issues and solutions with all staff members in a strategic and organized way.
- New teachers' orientation - HSADSM believes that beginning teachers who have access to intensive mentoring by expert colleagues are much less likely to leave teaching in the early years. Our mentoring program will provide beginning teachers with support and assistance to help navigate the difficult early years of teaching as they perfect their teaching skills.
- Continuous administrative support and feedback - school administrators provide frequent feedback about teachers' performances through classroom walkthrough, classroom observations, attending school events and activities, meeting with teachers when necessary. With consistent feedback, teachers will develop themselves and improve their practices every day, which will increase their likelihood of staying at HSADSM for longer.
- Create a physically and emotionally safe and secure working environment - HSADSM will strategically work on creating a working environment that staff trusts each other and administrators, is collegial and collaborative, and where people feel emotionally and physically secure. Installation of security cameras, effective and constant student monitoring, training for emergency situations, administrative support, and assistance with conducting difficult conversations with parents, having security personnel, when necessary, implementation of school discipline policies consistently are measures that HSADSM will take to create an environment that teachers will look forward to coming to.

HSADSM believes that implementation of such strategies will help us retain a high percentage of our teachers. We are confident that our management organization Concept Schools will attain high percentage of teacher retention rate as other Concept-managed schools have staff retention rates between 70-90%.

HSADSM culture, values, and learning expectations start with the school's staff. Staff members will form a strong team, unified by a common mission, vision, and set of values. Based on this shared foundation, staff will help create, maintain, and improve the school culture on an annual basis. The HSADSM Summer Institute will take place one week prior to the start of school so that teachers are immersed in the mission, philosophy, vision, values, and key aspects of the school culture before they step foot in a classroom. Teachers will receive 5 full days of intense training prior to the school opening. During the Summer Institute, teachers will learn about the Concept model and deepen their understanding of the culture. Team building activities will foster trust and a collegial atmosphere. Teachers will be

17. Proposed Recruitment and Development of Administration, Staff, and Governing Board

engaged in activities to enhance their ability to differentiate the curriculum and effectively incorporate technology into their lesson plans.

Seven full days will be designated as professional development days and spread throughout the year. On those days, HSADSM will either have experts come to the school and work with staff, or staff members will work in teams on areas of improvement. Professional development also will take place as a part of the team structure that will be integral at HSADSM. The key to effective professional development is establishing a school culture where learning is valued among all members of the school.

The leadership team, consisting of the entire administrative team, grade chairs, and department chairs, will meet monthly to discuss and resolve issues that have been raised in the other team meetings. Thus, teaching and learning will be monitored weekly, biweekly, and monthly through a system of checks and balances. This structure will allow faculty to be part of the decision-making process at HSADSM.

The principal and assistant principal of academics will review the minutes or join meetings to ensure that meetings are effective. Each team will develop annual goals and benchmarks to measure progress. Teams will develop professional development plans based on their analysis of their students' academic data and the needs of team members. Teams will present their professional development plans at the leadership team meeting via their leaders. The leadership team will determine whether speakers and experts are brought to the school for workshops or whether staff members will attend conferences or seminars.

Additionally, current professional magazines, books, and films regarding innovative educational methods will be made available to faculty and staff. Faculty and staff also will be provided opportunities for study, travel, workshops and conferences, and teacher exchanges. The school will partially reimburse faculty for tuition that furthers their development as teachers. All professional development will have specifically stated outcomes. Upon implementation, teachers will assess student knowledge/skills and make changes in classroom practice. For every professional development session, the assessment will be developed simultaneously.

Evaluation of the professional development program at HSADSM will be a results-based process. Twice a year, data regarding classroom performance, discipline, a collaboration between faculty, seminars and workshops, student achievement, parental involvement, community involvement, and technology integration will be reviewed. This data will be analyzed and shared at a staff meeting where staff will openly exchange ideas, thoughts, and solutions. Conclusions will drive the focus of future professional development. For example, if HSADSM held a workshop on improving writing and critical thinking, classrooms will then be observed to find out how often faculty used the tools and strategies given to them. Writing scores of the students in interim assessments will be reviewed to connect the student growth to the strategies being implemented because of the professional development.

The findings of the benchmark assessments will drive the professional development plan. The HSADSM teachers will go through an extensive training regarding data-driven instruction, benchmark assessments, and formative assessments during the Summer Institute and during professional development days. As results are obtained from the assessment, teachers will identify areas in which further professional development is necessary to improve student outcomes.

HSADSM believes in taking a job-embedded approach to professional development. School leaders and members of the Concept Schools Academic Department collaborate to build the pedagogical capacity of staff through a variety of formal and informal opportunities throughout the school year.

Through targeted job-embedded professional development opportunities and based on data, the staff build their capacity and model lifelong learning, e.g., through visits to other Concepts-managed schools, and training provided at HSADSM on the key components of the Concept Schools' design such as data-driven instruction, integration of technology in the instructions, building positive relationships with the students, discipline, and student engagement. Seven full days are designated as professional development days and spread throughout the year.

17. Proposed Recruitment and Development of Administration, Staff, and Governing Board

17.2. Attach the proposed charter school's employment policies, including performance evaluation plans.

[For additional information, please see Appendix J: Principal Evaluation Rubric Draft](#)

[For additional information, please see Appendix L1: Teacher Formal Evaluation Rubric DRAFT](#)

[For additional information, please see Appendix L2: Concept Schools Teacher Performance Evaluation Plan](#)

[For additional information about the Equal Employment Opportunity, please see Section 38 in Appendix M: Sample Personnel Policies](#)

This should include hiring policies and a plan or form for [educator evaluation](#) and address compliance with applicable state and federal employment policies.

18. Proposed Governing Bylaws

18.1. Attach the proposed governing bylaws for the proposed charter school.

[For additional information, please see Appendix N: Governing Bylaws DRAFT](#)

[For more information, see Appendix I: CMO Evaluation Rubric Draft](#)

19. Partnerships or Contractual Relationships

19.1. Does any independent founding group or proposed governing board member have a partnership or contractual relationship with an education service provider related to the proposed charter school's operations or mission (Mark either yes or no)?

"Education service provider" means an education management organization, charter school management organization, or other person with whom a charter school contracts for educational program implementation or comprehensive management" [Iowa Code § 256E.2(4)].

Yes (must complete 19.1.1)

No (skip to 20.1)

19.1.1. If yes, state the name(s) of the education service provider(s). For each provider listed, explain the partnership or contractual relationship.

n/a

20. Proposed Transportation, Food, Operational, and/or Ancillary Services

20.1. Describe the proposed plan for providing transportation services.

This should describe:

- Bus inspection,
- Bus safety,
- Driver training,
- Planned routes, and
- Transportation charges.

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines will not provide transportation services. HSADSM will revisit this plan should transportation funding be provided by the state.

20.2. Describe the proposed plan for providing food services.

This should describe:

- How the school will provide nutritious lunches to children,
- If the school will participate in the National School Lunch Program, and
- Its process for income eligibility and verification.

Horizon Science Academy Des Moines will collaborate with the Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Health and Nutrition to identify and select a Food Service Management Company. HSADSM will adhere to established protocols and timetable for procuring a food service management company.

HSADSM will participate in the National School Lunch Program and follow the income eligibility and verification process to provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost or no-cost lunches to all students each school day.

According to the Bureau of Health, as of October 2022, there are four food service management companies currently serving schools across Iowa: Chartwells K-12 School Dining, Lunchtime Solutions, Inc., Opaa! Food Management, Inc., and Taher, Inc.

Upon receiving charter approval, HSADSM will go out for bids/proposals for its food service management, following the Bureau's procurement protocols and guidance. HSADSM will enter into an agreement with a food service management company before July 1.

20.3. Describe the proposed plan for all other operational or ancillary services.

This may describe:

- School facility maintenance,
- School business and finance,
- Technology, and
- Safety and security.

The Governing Board of Horizon Science Academy will enter into an agreement with Concept Schools, a non-profit charter management organization, to receive comprehensive academic, operational, and financial services.

Please see [Appendix O: Charter Management Agreement DRAFT](#) for additional details related to the services provided and relationship between the governing board and Concept Schools.

21. Proposed Family and School Partnerships

21.1. Describe how parents and guardians will be given opportunities to be involved in the proposed charter school.

This may describe:

- How input and feedback from parents will be requested and used,
 - How family-school partnerships will be used to strengthen support for learning,
 - Volunteer activities the school will seek or offer to parents,
 - How the school will conduct parent-teacher conferences and provide other opportunities for parents to communicate with their child's teacher, and
 - How the school will communicate with families that do not speak English.
-

21. Proposed Family and School Partnerships

Concept Schools and HSADSM value the mutualistic relationships that exist between the school, school families, and the larger school community. The principal will serve as the primary face of the school and responsible for ensuring that the community understands the mission and vision of HSADSM. To aid in establishing and maintaining a positive school culture for students, staff, and the larger community, the assistant principal will be charged with the tasks of identifying parent advocate groups to assist in school decision-making processes, to communicate the stories of HSADSM, and to advocate for a family's right to school choice.

As is consistent in many Concept-managed schools, a Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) is hired as a full-time staff member to assist in building the community's capacity. HSADSM will hire this individual as budgeting allows during its initial charter term, until then, the work of community engagement will lay with an administrator. Through the collaborative efforts of school leadership and Concept Schools' Chief Strategic Growth and Communication Officer, a community engagement representative will be identified, trained, and empowered to establish and maintain positive relationships alongside the school leaders.

Both Concept and HSADSM understand that the needs of school families and the school community at large may vary, and it is the responsibility of the CEC to solicit needs and establish collaborative partnerships within the community to best support HSADSM families.

HSADSM founders believe that it is important to have the support of the local community (e.g., families, civic leaders, business community) and to view the school as its own, and to see the school as a solution to improve education for their children. With this belief, HSADSM and Concept School plan on conducting the following activities to cultivate additional demand for HSADSM and to learn how best to maintain the existing culture at HSADSM:

- Establish relationships with local community leaders and families and work to help them become aware and understand what HSADSM looks like and what it can do for the community and generate their support.
- Understand the process and what supports are needed to create a successful school
- Provide a variety of opportunities to share the mission of HSADSM
- Determine any unique financial opportunities for families to support fundraising efforts
- Develop ways the school can serve as a community resource
- Identify community partnerships that align with the HSADSM mission

HSADSM will regularly communicate with the school community via a variety of methods to inform the school community about events or programs, educate the school community about charter schools, academic topics, and services the school provides, and to celebrate student learning and school successes. This information will be shared through semiregular newsletters, principal emails, social media posts, and events such as open houses and assemblies.

Teachers are expected to regularly communicate with families to discuss student learning, and they will do this through email communications, phone calls, home visits, and regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences during the Fall and Spring semesters.

Like how the Home Language Survey is administered during enrollment, HSADSM will take care to ensure that all families could speak with school staff.

If other languages are needed, staff can access additional resources from the TransACT, an educational service provider. HSADSM is prepared to conduct oral and native language conversations in the student's home in Spanish with those adults who may not have sufficient English or literacy skills to communicate in English. If there is a need for other languages, every attempt is made to find competent adults in the community to assist or HSADSM will utilize language line phone services.

22. Start-Up and Five-Year Plans

22.1 and 22.2 should be distinguished from each other.

22.1. Describe the school start-up plan that includes information, timeline(s), and the individual(s) responsible for each of the following items:

- **Finances;**
- **Budget;**
- **Insurance coverage; and**
- **Facility construction, preparation, and contingencies.**

School financial planning, budgeting, and insurance coverage is coordinated by Concept Schools, and overseen by its treasurer, and subject to governing board approval.

Concept Schools collaborates with New Plan Learning which is a non-profit organization that specializes in turn-key charter school facilities. New Plan Learning finds eligible buildings, completes feasibility studies, and presents it to Concept and school board. If the project is approved by both Concept and the HSADSM governing board, New Plan oversees school building selection and improvements to ensure its readiness to open Fall 2023.

A sample startup timeline will be adjusted accordingly to actual approval dates and Iowa state requirements.

[For additional information, please see Appendix K: Proposed Staffing Plan](#)

[For additional information, please see Appendix P: HSADSM Startup Timeline](#)

[For additional information, please see Appendix Q: 5-yr Budget Forecast](#)

22.2. Describe the five-year plan that includes information, timeline(s), and the individual(s) responsible for each of the following items:

- **Finances;**
- **Budget;**
- **Insurance coverage; and**
- **Facility construction, preparation, and contingencies.**

For future facilities improvements, Concept Schools will again collaborate with New Plan Learning. Depending upon the facility selected for HSADSM, renovations may coincide with the enrollment plan. Additional classrooms and necessary improvements will be added as the number of grade levels and student enrollment increases.

[For additional information, please see Appendix Q: 5-yr Budget Forecast](#)

23. Fundraising

23.1. Does the proposed charter school have anticipated fundraising contributions (Mark only one set of brackets)?

This includes any fundraising activities or grant activities known to the applicant at the time of the application. Examples might include U.S. Department of Education grants, state grants, or local fundraising efforts.

- Yes (must attach evidence to 23.1.1)
 No (skip to 24.1)

~~23.1.1. If yes, attach evidence of the contributions to [Appendix I](#).~~

[For additional information, please see Appendix U: Fundraising](#)

24. Evidence of Prior Student Success

24.1. Will the proposed governing board contract with an education services provider (Mark only one set of brackets)?

- Yes (continue to 24.2)
 No (skip to 26.1)

24.2. Attach evidence of the educational service provider's success in serving student populations like those proposed in this application

This may include demonstration of:

- Growth on assessment scores over time for the specific population;
- Provision of curriculum and instruction matched to the student population being served;
- Increased student enrollment and attendance for the specific population;
- Decreased student discipline for the specific population; and
- Exemplary parent and community involvement for the specific population.

[For additional information, please see Appendix R: Evidence of CMO Success](#)

24.3. Has the educational service provider operated other charter schools (Mark either yes or no)?

A "No" response does not disqualify the applicant.

- Yes (must attach evidence to 24.3.1)
 No (skip to 25.1)

24. Evidence of Prior Student Success

24.3.1. If yes, attach evidence of past performance of other charter schools and the founding group's capacity for an additional charter school.

[For additional information, please see Appendix R: Evidence of CMO Success](#)

This must include demonstration of the founding group's:

- Past performance of other charter schools, which may be demonstrated by:
 - Growth on assessment scores over time;
 - Curriculum, instruction, and assessment matched to the mission of the charter school;
 - Increased student enrollment and attendance;
 - Decreased student discipline;
 - Exemplary parent and community involvement;
 - Financial stability; and
 - Staff stability.
- Capacity for an additional charter school, which may be demonstrated by:
 - Sound budget management;
 - Proper allocation of resources;
 - Fundraising efforts; and
 - Level of commitment and time for the proposed school.

25. Proposed Staff Performance Evaluation

25.1. Describe the proposed educational service provider's staff performance evaluation measures and compensation structure for teachers, administrators, and other staff members.

In the spring of 2019, the Concept Teacher Evaluation Committee (CTEC) was charged with developing a new evaluation plan for Concept Schools. By the summer of 2020, the Concept Teacher Evaluation Committee (CTEC) researched various models and chose the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument 2013 Edition by Charlotte Danielson. In Fall 2020, CTEC organized an “Introduction to Danielson Framework” workshop for school administrators and hosted Charlotte Danielson as a keynote speaker at the Leadership Summit. CTEC worked with superintendents and helped create the Distance Learning Framework adopted from the Danielson Group.

The Concept Schools Teacher Evaluation System uses the Charlotte Danielson Framework and rubric for collecting and presenting data to record and develop teacher performance. The mission of Concept Schools in learning targets aligned to standards posted and used in the classroom.

Lesson plans reflect standards, current practices, and adopted curriculum to “change the trajectory of students’ lives.” To that end, providing students with a solid educational foundation is critical. To ensure all Concept Schools students achieve at high levels requires ensuring our system has strong Tier 1 instructional practice in place. The Concept Schools Teacher Evaluation process balances our focus on our mission and expectations with teacher creativity and initiative to guide effective instructional practice. At the heart of the teacher evaluation system, the process is to support continuous teacher growth and professional development. It is considered a “Coach You,” not a “Caught You” experience. This is to be accomplished through monitoring, observation, meaningful feedback, reflection, professional dialogue, and using data to drive professional growth and development.

CTEC produced a teacher evaluation handbook to outline the Concept Schools’ network teacher evaluation process. This handbook serves as a reference tool to help teachers and administrators understand Concept Schools’ procedures for observing, documenting, and evaluating classroom instruction and overall teacher performance. This handbook should guide understanding the teacher evaluation process components and the Framework for Teaching Rubric as we transition to using this model.

Based on the Concept Teacher Evaluation Committee’s (CTEC) philosophy, evaluation of a teacher shall be conducted for the primary purpose of improving instruction, and “feedback” should be constructive and accompanied by suggestions for improvement.

To meet this end, the Concept Teacher Evaluation process will:

- Provide a framework for a professional practice that develops a shared understanding of the complexities of teaching, which supports a collaborative culture within our educational community leading to student achievement
- Provide a common language among teachers and observers
- Incorporate the use of self-assessment and self-reflection throughout the evaluation process
- Structure professional conversation around best practices in teaching and learning
- Support the school’s mission, vision, overarching understandings, learning principles, and teaching practices
- Promote professional growth through a formative examination of practice
- Structure training programs, such as the school’s Induction and Mentoring Programs, to the Danielson Framework to support the development of teachers

The performance evaluation plan is fully outlined in Appendix L2. The evaluation framework utilized at HSADSM focuses in four domains:

- Planning and preparation
- Learning environments
- Learning experiences
- Principled teaching

The CTEC is developing a similar evaluation plan for administrators. HSADSM will adopt updated practices when made available. For now, refer to details in section 15 of this application and Appendix J.

25. Proposed Staff Performance Evaluation

[For additional information, please see Appendix L1: Teacher Formal Evaluation Rubric DRAFT](#)

[For additional information, please see Appendix L2: Concept Schools Teacher Performance Evaluation Plan](#)

25.2. Describe the proposed educational service provider's methods of contract oversight and dispute resolution.

For information, please see [Appendix O: Charter Management Agreement DRAFT](#).

25.3. Describe the proposed educational service provider's investment disclosures and conflicts of interest.

[For additional information, please see Appendix T: Conflict of Interest Policy SAMPLE](#)

This sample policy was approved by Horizon Science Academy Primary, a K-2 elementary school in Columbus, OH. HSA Primary is a highly successful school within the Concept network.

26. Proposed Charter School Contract with State Board

26.1. Attach an outline of the proposed charter school contract with the State Board to [Appendix L](#) that includes:

- **Duration,**
- **Designation of roles,**
- **Authority,**
- **Duties of the governing board, and**
- **Charter school staff.**

Any contract should include a review by the applicant's legal counsel.

Please see the attached charter school agreement between the Gateway Science Academy governing board and the Missouri Charter Public School Commission. Gateway Science Academy of St. Louis is part of the Concept Schools network, and the 5-year charter term became effective July 2020.

HSADSM proposes a similar charter agreement between the governing board and the Iowa State Board of Education.

[For additional information, see Appendix S: Sample Charter School Contract](#)

27. Statute and/or Rule Waiver

27.1. Does the independent founding group wish to request a waiver of one or more of the following requirements from which the charter is not already exempt according to Iowa Administrative Code chapter 19.11 (2): Iowa Code section 256.7(21) and the educational standards of Iowa Code section 256.11 and/or the minimum requirements for instructional hours or days (Mark only one set of brackets)?

- Yes (continue to 27.2)
 No (skip to assurances and conditions)

27.2. Select each statute and/or administrative rule with which the charter school does not intend to comply (Mark all that apply).

- n/a
- Requirements of Iowa Code section 256.7, subsection 21 and the educational standards of Iowa Code section 256.11.
 Provision of instruction for at least the number of days or hours required by Iowa Code section 279.10, subsection 1.

27.3. Describe the technical assistance sought by the independent founding group from the Department concerning statutes and administrative rules that may be waived including the reason the charter is requesting to have each statute and/or administrative rule waived.

n/a

Iowa Public Charter School Program Assurances and Conditions

ASSURANCES

Please mark the following assurances with Y for yes and N for no. If the applicant is unable to assure compliance with any of the assurances, the application will not be approved. Later discovery of a provider's failure to adhere to any of the assurances may be the basis for the State Board to revoke the charter contract.

Y/N	The proposed charter school assures that:
Y	A. It will meet all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety requirements and laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, ancestry, or disability. If approved, the charter school will be subject to any court-ordered desegregation in effect for the school district at the time the charter school application is approved, unless otherwise specifically provided for in the desegregation order.
Y	B. It will operate as a nonsectarian, nonreligious school.
Y	C. It will be free of tuition and application fees to Iowa resident students between the ages of five and 21 years.
Y	D. It will comply with chapters 216 and 216A relating to civil and human rights.
Y	E. It will provide special education services in accordance with chapter 256B.
Y	F. It understands that it is subject to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as a school district. The audit must be consistent with the requirements of sections 11.6, 11.14, 11.19, and 279.29, and section 256.9, subsection 20, except to the extent deviations are necessary because of the program at the school. The Department, the auditor of state, or the Legislative Services Agency may conduct financial, program, or compliance audits.

Y	G. It will comply with the requirements of section 256.7, subsection 21, and the educational standards of section 256.11, unless specifically waived by the State Board during the application process.
Y	H. It will provide instruction for at least the number of days or hours required by section 279.10, subsection 1, unless specifically waived by the State Board as part of the application process.
Y	I. It will comply with the requirements of chapter 256E.
Y	J. Its governing board meetings will be conducted in a manner that is open to the public. The governing board will be a governmental body for purposes of chapter 21 relating to open meetings.
Y	K. It understands that all records, documents, and electronic data of the charter school and of the governing board—its governing body for purposes of chapter 22—will be public records and are subject to the provisions of chapter 22 relating to the examination of public records.
Y	L. It will employ or contract with teachers as defined in section 272.1, who hold valid licenses with an endorsement for the type of instruction or service for which the teachers are employed or under contract.
Y	M. It will have a chief administrator that is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An administrator who holds a valid license under chapter 272, • A teacher who holds a valid license under chapter 272, or • An individual who holds an authorization to be a charter school administrator issued by the Board of Educational Examiners under chapter 272.
Y	N. It will not discriminate in its student admissions policies or practices based on intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a person with a disability. However, a charter school may limit admission to students who are within a particular range of ages or grade levels or on any other basis that would be legal if initiated by a school district.
Y	O. It will give enrollment priority to the siblings of students enrolled in a charter school.
Y	P. It will enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, students must be accepted by lot.
Y	Q. It will, upon enrollment of an eligible student, notify the public school district of residence not later than March 1 of the school year preceding the year of enrollment.
Y	R. It will adopt a conflict-of-interest policy and a code of ethics for all board members and employees.
Y	S. It will adopt a policy regarding the hiring of family members to avoid nepotism in hiring and supervision. The policy must include but is not limited to a disclosure to the governing board of potential nepotism in hiring and supervision. Any person subject to the policy with a conflict must not be involved in the hiring decision or supervision of a potential employee.
Y	T. It will prohibit individuals compensated by an education service provider from serving as a voting member on the governing board unless the State Board waives such prohibition.
Y	U. It will have a majority of the membership of the governing board be residents of the geographic area served by the charter school. Each member of the governing board who is not a resident of the geographic area served by the charter school must be a resident of Iowa.
Y	V. It will post the charter school's annual budget on the charter school's website for public viewing within 10 days of approval of the budget. Each posted budget must

	continue to be accessible to the public on the website for all subsequent budget years [Iowa Code § 256E.7(2)-(11)].
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CONDITIONS

Each condition must be met and followed for the duration of the charter school contract. The failure to maintain any of these conditions could result in the revocation of the charter by the State Board [Iowa Code § 256E.10(3)].

Reporting

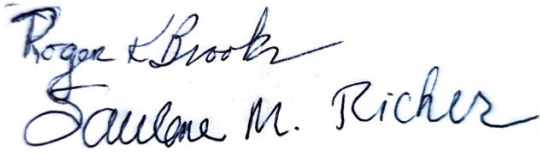
To meet the data reporting requirements, including student enrollment and performance information needed for the performance framework, charter schools must use a student information system that will transmit information to the Department that is compliant with the School Interoperability Framework (SIF) education data standard [Iowa Admin. Code r. 281—19.10(3)].

Non-Discrimination

Iowa Code section 256E.7, subsection 4, states that a charter school cannot discriminate in its student admissions policies or practices based on intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a person with a disability. However, a charter school may limit admission to students who are within a particular range of age or grade level or on any other basis that would be legal if initiated by a school district. Enrollment priority must be given to the siblings of students enrolled in a charter school.

Certification

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby submit an Iowa public charter school program application and agree to the conditions and assurances contained therein.



Roger K. Brooks & Saulene M. Richer

Founding Group Authorized Representative Signature

November 1, 2022

Date



Christine Hensley

Proposed Governing Board President Signature*

November 1, 2022

Date



Christopher S. Murphy

Education Service Provider Authorized Representative Signature*

November 1, 2022

Date

*If identified



Horizon Science Academy Des Moines
Public Charter School Application

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This is the last page of the application.