For Prospective GVCC GVA Board Members

The following is intended to provide individuals interested in serving on a GVA or GVCC Board of Directors a sense of what is expected of a Board member per the following sections:

   A. Board Duties
   B. Board Member Agreement
   C. Board of Directors’ Code of Conduct
   D. Process for Orienting New Board Members
   E. Recommendations for GVA Boards to Engage Stakeholders
   F. Conflict of Interest Policy
   G. Standards 9 & 10 and Indicators

In terms of a profile of an effective charter school Board member, the following characteristics are instructive:

1. They are **visionary and future focused**, spending their decision-making time looking forward.
2. They possess an **entrepreneurial spirit** because their school exists in a fast changing environment that demands innovative programs and services to meet existing and emerging educational needs.
3. They are **risk takers**, balancing the need for innovation with their stewardship responsibilities.
4. They are **good communicators**, understanding the importance of effective communication to all of the stakeholders to whom the school is accountable.
5. They are **systems thinkers** focused on the root causes/forces that shape the issues and challenges facing their school, community, and educational landscape & they respond with systematic solutions.
6. They **utilize assessment data and educational research** for decision making and strategic planning.
7. They develop creative ways to connect their school to the world around them, exploring and imagining **new forms of partnership and alliances** to pursue their mission and goals.
8. They have a **deep appreciation for the strength of diversity**, understanding that diversity promotes creativity, innovation, and organizational learning.
9. They are committed to **building a learning organization**, realizing that board effectiveness and overall charter school effectiveness will be greatly enhanced if there are systems, practices, and structures in place that promote individual and organizational learning.
10. They are **committed to educational excellence** and are relentless in pursuing it.

Adapted from *Creating an Effective Charter School Governing Board Guidebook* by Frank Martinelli

A. Board Duties

1. Attend meetings and work sessions of GVCC and/or GVA Board of Directors as outlined in the annual Board calendar.
2. Ensure that the school effectively fulfills its mission and achieves its vision. All programs, activities, and expenditures are to be evaluated based upon the mission and vision.
3. Determine the responsibilities of the Executive, either for GVCC or GVA, and participate in a search when the position is vacant to recruit the most qualified individual for the position.
4. Provide proper and prudent financial oversight of GVA.
5. Ensure that adequate resources, financial and otherwise, exist to ensure that GVA fulfills its mission.
6. Provide leadership on GVCC Board committees. Each Director is expected to serve as an active member of at least one committee.
7. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability to stakeholders.
8. Participate in business and strategic planning.
9. Maintain focus on academic performance utilizing student data from assessments related to GVA’s School Performance Framework and GVA’s Unified Performance Plan.
10. Commit time to developing financial resources for GVCC/GVA. This includes making a personally meaningful financial gift as well as supporting other fund development activities (e.g., grant writing, corporate partnerships, fundraising events, etc.).
11. Prepare in advance for decision-making and policy formation at Board meetings.
12. Responsibly review and act upon recommendations that come before the Board for action.
13. Take responsibility for self-education about relevant educational and operational issues.
14. Actively support the GVCC/GVA Executive, including participation in his/her annual performance evaluation.
15. Participate in ongoing board development activities and in the Board of Directors annual Board evaluation process.
16. Attend key school activities in order to support GVA and its programs.
17. Enhance GVA’s visibility and reputation in the community. This involves clearly articulating GVA’s mission, goals, and accomplishments to the public and garnering support from the community.
18. In general, utilize personal and professional skills, relationships, and knowledge for the advancement of GVA.

B. Board Member Agreement

The purpose of the Board Member Agreement is to explicitly articulate roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors and individual directors, and to communicate to the public and GVCC/GVA stakeholders the complexity of charter school governance and what they can expect of the Board of Directors and its members. This Board Member Agreement is to be signed annually by all Board members to acknowledge it as binding.

Board of Director Responsibilities:
1. Carry out duties in accordance with the federal and state law, applicable policies of CDE, the authorizing district and the charter contract, as well as ethical standards as they relate to a charter school as both a public entity and a non-profit organization.
2. Select, appoint, monitor, advise, motivate, support, and evaluate the GVCC CEO/GAO and GVA Principals.
3. Defend and preserve the institutional autonomy of the GVCC & GVA, recognizing that the preservation of autonomy requires academic performance and organizational accountability.
4. Maintain fiduciary responsibility over all funds and appropriations for the school.
5. Participate in the development of policies, GVCC business plan, GVA strategic plans, educational goals, and annual budgets, while clearly delegating educational and management responsibilities to the GVCC CEO/GAO and GVA Principals.
6. Accept fiduciary responsibility for the long-term welfare of the GVCC/GVA.
7. Ensure that adequate resources are available for GVCC and GVA.
8. Maintain a strong, continuous focus on academic performance.
9. Ensure collaboration with GVCC/GVA stakeholders.
10. Monitor and evaluate the performance of GVCC/GVA in pursuing its mission and achieving its vision.
11. Regularly evaluate the Board’s performance and take steps to improve it.
12. Assure that GVCC/GVA promotes equal opportunity.
13. Monitor standards of performance for students, faculty, staff, parents, and guardians.
14. Utilize GVCC Committees to advance the mission of GVCC/GVA.
15. Be aware of parent and student perceptions of the GVCC/GVA’s culture and performance.
16. Ensure that rights accorded to students and parents in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) are protected.
17. Comply with all requirements of Colorado’s Open Meetings Law and Open Records Law.

Individual Director Responsibilities:

1. Recognize that authority rests only with the Board as a whole and not in its individual members.
2. Be knowledgeable of the Board Policy Handbook, the core documents referenced therein, and the appendices.
3. In the role of Board member, thoughtfully discharge the duties of Care, Loyalty, and Obedience.
   a. Duty of Care: Directors meet the duty of care by exercising their responsibilities in good faith and with diligence, attention, care, and skill; carrying out the mission GVCC and GVA; insuring the submission of required filings; and complying GVCC’s and GVA’s organization’s governing documents. The duty of care includes both decision-making and oversight responsibilities, and is fulfilled by regularly attending board meetings, preparing for board meetings by reading minutes and applicable reports, participating in discussions, understanding the GVCC’s/GVA’s programs, maintaining a careful oversight of finances, and questioning unclear or troubling activity (CRS § 7-128-401).
   b. Duty of Loyalty: Directors meet the duty of loyalty by placing the interests of the organization before their own private interests and avoiding the use of organizational opportunities for personal gain (CRS § 7-128-401).
   c. Duty of Obedience: Directors meet the duty of obedience by complying with federal, state, and local law, adhering to the organization’s governing documents, and guarding the organization’s mission (CRS § 7-128-401).
4. Never allow any personal conflict of interest to remain undisclosed. Per the GVCC/GVA Conflict of Interest policy, bring any personal conflicts of interest to the attention of the Board as soon as possible. Recuse yourself from deliberations and voting in connection with the conflicts.
5. Direct requests for information or comments about school policy or issues by the Media to the Board President.
6. Understand, support, and advocate for the mission and vision of GVCC/GVA, as well as our P-16 educational reform work in the areas of second language acquisition, international benchmarking, and 21st century skills, including cross-cultural understanding.
7. Enhance the public image and promote the visibility of GVCC/GVA.
8. Participate in all Board Development activities and in self-education about all aspects regarding charter schools and public education.
9. Represent both GVCC and GVA rather than any one part or particular interest, community, constituency, or GVA school.
10. In keeping with the GVCC/GVA Code of Conduct, foster openness and trust among the Board, the administration, the faculty, the students, the parents/guardians, and the public. This includes the presumption of good will on the part of others.
11. Seek to be fully informed about GVCC/GVA and its role in the educational environment locally, nationally, and internationally.
12. Participate in raising funds for GVCC/GVA.
13. Be fully informed on issues that require a decision by the Board.
14. Prepare for all meetings by reading the materials provided in advance.
15. Attend meetings of the Board, including committee meetings, and be prepared to discuss the items on the agenda.
16. Speak your mind at committee and board meetings, and support Board decisions and the policies adopted by Speaking with One Voice as a Board.
17. Maintain respect for the opinions of other directors.
18. Foster thoughtful policymaking.
19. Read and promptly respond as necessary to internal correspondence and communications.
20. Understand that the Director’s primary governance role is policymaking, not involvement in school administration or day-to-day management. (This includes the grievance process in which bringing a grievance to Board is the final step in the process, not the first.)
21. Work collaboratively and respectfully with the CEO/CAO and Principals, and their respective staff.
22. Communicate promptly any significant concern or complaint to the Board President who will address it with the CEO/CAO and Principal so they can deal with the issue. The executive will provide feedback as appropriate.

C. GVCC/GVA Board of Directors’ Code of Conduct

Each director and officer of the Collaborative and each School shall, prior to entering upon their duties and annually, agree that as a condition of his or her service he or she will: Behave in an ethical, businesslike, and lawful manner, and therefore:
- make proper use of authority, and observe appropriate decorum.
- be guided by the School’s mission, to serve the School’s students.

Observe the roles of the Collaborative and Charter Boards in governance and policy development and respect the role of administration in day-to-day management of the School and Collaborative and, therefore:
- not purport personally to direct any staff member, student, or Contractor at the School or Collaborative, or to communicate, outside of official Board processes, judgments on the administration’s or any teacher’s performance, provided that the President of the Collaborative may direct the CAO/CEO and school contractor.

Respect the integrity of the Collaborative Board and Charter Board processes, and therefore:
- listen, speak my mind, and share all relevant information with other directors in a courteous manner.
- respect the opinions of others.
- address issues, not personalities, and thus not make disparaging remarks, in or out of meetings, about other directors, administrators, teachers, or the School.
• once a vote has been taken, accept and respect the decision of the group and support its implementation.
• except when carrying out delegated duties, not purport to conduct School business outside of Collaborative Board and Charter Board meetings.
• except as otherwise explicitly authorized, not attempt to speak for the School or represent the School, provided that a Collaborative Board or Charter Board President is authorized to attend meetings as a representative of that Board and to speak publicly on matters of Collaborative or School interest, in coordination with Collaborative and School administration.

Act for the benefit of the Schools, not myself or others, and therefore:
• not use any Board position for the economic advantage of myself, relatives, friends, or for any business in which he or she has an interest.
• not use a any Board position to benefit any organization other than the GVCC and the School.
• disclose any conflict of interest and excuse myself from deliberation and vote on any such issue.

Respect confidentiality and protect and maintain the proper confidences of the School, and therefore:
• under no circumstances reveal any family or student confidential information, including family addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, or other contact information.
• under no circumstances disclose to others properly confidential deliberations of a Board.

Promptly notify the appropriate Board of any change that may affect eligibility to serve or willingness or ability to abide by these rules.

D. Process for Orienting New Board Members
Serving on a Board of Directors for a charter school or a charter collaborative is both rewarding and challenging. There is a great deal to learn about public education requirements as they affect charter schools. The following is a list of items that Board members must become familiar with to govern effectively and wisely. Generally, this orientation process is expected to three to four months based on available time for reading and for completing ten of the CDE Charter School Board Training Modules. All of these materials are made available to all Board members.

- GVA Bylaws, the GVCC Bylaws, and the GVA/GVCC contract.
- History of GVA GVCC
- Charter School Application (optional, but very instructive)
- Current charter school contract with the school’s authorizer
- GVCC/GVA Board of Directors Policy Manual: Governance & Administration Policies (being updated)
- GVCC-GVA Employee Manual
- GVA Parent & Student Handbook
- Colorado Standards & Indicators for Continuous School Improvement with special attention to the two standards on governance—Standard 9: Strong Board Governance and Standard 10: Sound Fiscal Management
- Glossary of Terms for Charter Schools
- Global Village Charter Collaborative is like...
- GVA GVCC GVI FAQs
It is also expected that a new Board member will complete the following ten CDE Charter School Board Training Modules. (There are a total of 30. The Board of a new school must complete all 30, but the responsibility for doing this can be divided among Board members.) GVCC has developed Study Guides to make this process relatively straightforward.

- Module 03: Board Member Conduct
- Module 04: Board Structure and Responsibilities
- Module 06: Promoting the Vision and Mission
- Module 09: Board Financial Oversight
- Module 12: Board Relationships
- Module 16: Accountability and Program Assessment
- Module 17: Sunshine Law
- Module 18: Selecting, Reviewing, and Supporting the Administrator
- Module 23: Charter Schools Act
- Module 25: Board Officer Responsibilities

E. Recommendations for GVA Boards to Engage Stakeholders

The following are suggestions, not requirements. Each site Board is free to adopt and adapt them in ways that best meet the need of the Board and school.

- Identify all school-wide events for the year and have Board members sign-up to attend different events with the goal of having at least two members at each event. This includes events sponsored by the PTO.

- Schedule 10-minute presentations by teacher teams and/or students for most Board meetings that would come immediately following the public comment session.

- Board members should attend information nights for recruitment. Ideally there should be one Board member at each event to welcome parents to the event.

- Each Board member should attend several of the coffees that the administrator holds with parents.

- Designate an annual Board Visit Day where all Board members visit the school for the day and attend a wide range of classes and special events created for that day.

- Schedule two town hall meetings on a Saturday morning, one in the fall and one in the early spring with food (ideally, breakfast and lunch). Design the event using The World Café method. See resources at http://www.theworldcafe.com/tools.html

- While Public Comment sessions are not required by law, they are offered as a common courtesy. While they are offered scheduled near the beginning of the Board meeting, they may be scheduled at any time. For Public Comment session, use a flip chart to write down all of the topics introduced as people speak or at least have the secretary keep a list of the topics raised. The Board President may later request that the Administrator provide follow-up with a speaker or determine that the topic should be addressed at a later Board meeting.

- During a Public Comment session, it is not appropriate to respond or ask questions of the person speaking. Responding by making comments or asking questions can
easily derail the meeting and is counter to the role of the Board as a deliberative body. None-the-less, the Board President has the discretion to thank the speaker, make a comment, or ask a question. Still, it is not wise to initiate a discussion since other speakers will expect the same opportunity.

- GVCC conducts a number of surveys for different stakeholder groups and will make those results available to each site Board. Following an analysis of the results a Board should hold focus groups with stakeholders in those areas where more information is needed before action is taken.

- Each site Board is encouraged to come up with other ideas for engaging stakeholders and sharing them within the network.

- Establish an “Ask the Board President” column to alternate with the “Ask the Principal” column in the weekly newsletter, allowing ALL stakeholders the opportunity to gain more information about a given topic.

- Establish a 5 minute meeting slot for the PTO to report on current activities.

- Place on the website registration forms for parents to sign up for a variety of Board sanctioned opportunities for school support and participation. (Ft. Collins website has this set up).


F. Global Village Charter Collaborative/Global Village Academy Conflict of Interest Policy

Article I
Purpose
The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt Organization's (Global Village Charter Collaborative/Global Village Academy) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit, tax-exempt and charitable organizations.

Article II
Definitions

1. Interested Person
Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest
A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:
   a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,
   b. A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

**Article III**

**Procedures**

**1. Duty to Disclose**

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

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

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

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

a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

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

a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

b. If, after hearing the member’s response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.
Article IV
Records of Proceedings
The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board’s or committee’s decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Article V
Compensation

a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member’s compensation.

b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member’s compensation.

c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Article VI
Annual Statements
Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

a. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
b. Has read and understands the policy,
c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
d. Understands the Organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Article VII
Periodic Reviews
To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm’s length bargaining.
b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization’s written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes.
and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

**Article VIII**
**Use of Outside Experts**
When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

**Article IX**
**Permanence of This Policy**
This policy is not subject to change by regular action of the Board of Directors of Global Village Charter Collaborative.

The above policy was moved, seconded and passed on February 11, 2011.
Global Village Charter Collaborative

[Signature]

By:___________________________________________________
President, Board of Directors, Global Village Charter Collaborative

**G. Standards 9 & 10 and Indicators**

**Standard 9: Strong Board Governance**: The school board demonstrates strong leadership through its procedures to promote the school’s mission, strategic planning, current knowledge of legislative issues, policy development, commitment to professional development, provision of resources, oversight/support of administrator, ability to build effective committees, and establishing networked community relationships.

Indicator 9.a. Vision/Mission and Governance Structure: The Governing Board promotes the vision and mission of the school through a strong governance structure.

9.a.1. Use of Vision and Mission to Promote School: The vision and mission is communicated publicly to stakeholders and the community through inclusion in all publications and conversations promoting the school.

9.a.2. Articulation of Vision and Mission: The board is consistent in its articulation of how the vision and mission is implemented throughout the school and educational programs.

9.a.3. Founding Documents: Board and board members adhere to approved bylaws and Articles of Incorporation in carrying out the school’s mission and vision.

9.a.4. Board Member Roles: Board member and officer roles and expectations are clearly defined and implemented.
9.a.5. Board Recruitment: A process exists to recruit highly qualified board members based on identified needs and a balanced board composition.


Indicator 9.b. Strategic Planning: The Governing Board promotes the vision and mission of the school through strategic planning.

9.b.1. Strategic Planning: The board engages in a regular strategic planning process that leads to key objectives and deliverables linked to the school’s vision, mission, and UIP.


9.c.1. Charter Contract and Waivers: Board practice and oversight of school activities reflect fidelity to the school’s charter contract and waivers.

9.c.2. Board Policies: Board policies align with federal laws, state laws and rules, and district policies (unless waived).

9.c.3. Sunshine Laws: Board practice complies with sunshine laws and open records and meeting requirements.

9.c.4. Board Professionalism: Board policies reflect expectations for professionalism, requiring board members to lead with integrity (e.g. duties of care, loyalty, obedience, conflict resolution).

9.c.5. Conflict and Crisis Resolution: Processes are in place to deal with conflict and prevent escalation or crisis.


9.d.1. Board Needs Assessment: Annual board needs assessments and evaluations result in consistent, ongoing professional development.

9.d.2. Board Training and Orientation: The board quickly and effectively engages new members in full, rigorous training.


9.e.1. Data Collection: The board has a data dashboard that includes data monitoring in at least these areas: Academic performance & Financial health

9.e.2. Input: The board obtains input from internal stakeholders (e.g. parents, staff, students, School Accountability Committee) and external stakeholders (e.g.
authorizer, businesses, community, third parties) to drive the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) for the school.

9.e.3. Data-Driven Decision Making: The board demonstrates frequent use of the data dashboard to drive decision-making.

9.e.4. Renewal Process: The board utilizes its authorizer’s annual review to ensure steady progress toward charter contract renewal.

Indicator 9.f. Administrator Hiring and Evaluation: The Governing Board has a clear plan for hiring, retaining, supporting, and evaluating the lead administrator.

9.f.1. Board and Lead Administrator Relationship: There is clear delineation of responsibilities between the board and the school’s lead administrator.

9.f.2. Lead Administrator Job Description: The lead administrator’s job description is feasible, detailed, and reflects the reality of the actual role.

9.f.3. Lead Administrator Hiring and Succession: A hiring and succession plan for securing a quality lead administrator is evident.

9.f.4. Lead Administrator Evaluation: The board uses an evaluation plan that focuses on mutually agreed upon targeted goals.

Indicator 9.g. Meetings and Committees: The Governing Board demonstrates effective use of meetings and committees.

9.g.1. Board Meetings: The board engages in timely, efficient, and productive meetings, as evidenced by timely decision making that does not impede important operations of the school.

9.g.2. Committee Goals: Committee goals are established, are actively being met, and support the school’s mission and vision.

9.g.3. Committee Reporting: Committee work is regularly reported to The board.

9.g.4. Committee Effectiveness: Committee structure, responsibilities, and work are regularly evaluated to ensure efficacy, quality, and efficiency.

Indicator 9.h. Stakeholder Management: The Governing Board supports the mission/vision of the school by securing strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

9.h.1. External Networking: The board actively networks with a variety of external stakeholders beyond the school to improve school and board function.

9.h.2. Internal Relationships: The board actively engages a wide variety of internal stakeholders (e.g. administration, staff, parents, students) to develop and maintain strong, positive working relationships.
Standard 10
Sound Fiscal Management:
The school board demonstrates strong fiscal management and school practices demonstrate current and future financial health.

Indicator 10.a. Budget: Governing Board and administration gather input to develop short-term and long-term budgets and make effective use of sound budgeting practices.

10.a.1. Annual Budget: The board and administration gather input to develop and monitor the annual school budget. The budget is effectively used for ongoing planning and regularly reviewed for accuracy.

10.a.2. Long Term Budget: The board and administration collaboratively develop, annually update, monitor, and use a long-term (3-10 year) rolling budget for short- and long-term planning. The board and administration can articulate how they use the long-term budget for accomplishing school goals.

10.a.3. Budget Priorities: Budget priorities are based on the school’s vision and mission statements. Budget priorities correlate and align with the school’s strategic plan. Budget priorities are collaboratively reviewed and documented based on analysis of performance data.

10.a.4. Stakeholder Input: The board and administration engage stakeholders appropriately in the development of the budget, present iterations of the budget to stakeholder groups, and evaluate stakeholder input. The board and administration openly share financial information and interpret the financial status of the school for all stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

10.a.5. Budget Timeline: The board has adopted an annual timeline outlining the processes for budget development, revision, approval, submission to the authorizer, and monitoring. The budgeting timeline meets the requirements for posting and review of the budget. The board makes good use of the annual budgeting timeline. The board uses the budgeting timeline when setting business meeting agendas.

10.a.6. Balanced Budget: The school operates with and regularly monitors a balanced budget. A plan exists for prioritizing the allocation or expenditure of surplus funding.

10.a.7. Budget Adjustments: The school proactively and effectively adjusts the budget to reflect changes in current enrollment and PPR funding. The board collaborates with the administration and the school’s finance committee to ensure that adjustments reflect school priorities. The board reviews adjustments monthly.

Indicator 10.b. Revenue and Program Costs: School leadership uses realistic revenue and program costs in the budget.

10.b.1. Enrollment Projections: The school budget is developed with accurate enrollment projections based on realistic internal and external data from a variety of sources. The school consistently uses conservative enrollment projections.
10.b.2. Revenue Projections: Revenue projections are realistic and based on guaranteed revenue streams. The school projects revenue conservatively. Guaranteed revenue streams are sufficient to fund operating costs.

10.b.3. Staff Resources and Salaries: Salaries and benefits are within the normal range of 50 – 70% of PPR or there are reasonable explanations for significant variances. All staff and administration salaries are commensurate with experience and qualifications. Payroll plus benefits are highly cost effective and highly competitive without any divergent individual salaries or staffing assignments.

10.b.4. Organizational Structure: The organizational structure is well-balanced between administration and instruction. Combined administrative salaries are 8-15% of total expenses, and instructional staff salaries are 50-60% of total expenses. Substantive variances can be justified.

10.b.5. Facility Costs: Lease/mortgage payments for an adequate and appropriate facility are current. Lease/mortgage payments are less than 12% of total PPR, or there is a reasonable explanation of the variance.

Indicator 10.c. Stable Programming: The school has enough revenue to ensure stable programming

10.c.1. Stable Enrollment: The school has a track record of consistently meeting or exceeding enrollment targets. Enrollment is growing appropriately, or has stabilized at an optimal number. The school maintains a substantial current waitlist (greater than 10% of total enrollment) of potential students.

10.c.2. Adequate PPR: Total per pupil revenue is adequate to cover all expenses with a surplus in cash to fund numerous strategically prioritized needs for improving academic achievement.

Indicator 10.d. Additional Revenue Resources: The school has developed other resources to achieve additional strategic priorities and can increase revenue if a shortfall occurs.

10.d.1. Additional Programs: The school has effectively implemented a variety of revenue-generating programs to augment per pupil revenue (e.g. before-and-after school care, pre-school, entrepreneurial endeavors) that align with the school’s program, mission and vision.

10.d.2. Grants: The school has successfully secured several grants from multiple sources beyond common start-up grants and has an effective and active structure for pursuing additional grant funding.

10.d.3. Fundraising: The school has structured fund development campaigns that successfully augment revenue. Numerous contacts in the internal (parent/family) and external community result in significant supplementary funding and resources.
Indicator 10.e. Report Requirements: The school understands and complies with reporting requirements of the state and charter authorizer.

10.e.1. Audit: An independent audit is performed and is reviewed by the board. The auditor reports an unqualified opinion that financials fairly represent the financial condition of the school. The most recent audit and consecutive previous audits reflect that the school has a history of operating with a positive fund balance.

10.e.2. Reporting: All state and authorizer reporting requirements are met in a timely and thorough manner. The school’s financial reporting system is set up to use the CDE Chart of Accounts (COA), budget format, and easily merges with authorizer information for reporting flow.

10.e.3. Financial Transparency Act: The school is in full compliance with the Financial Transparency Act. The school has posted online the annual budgets, annual audits, quarterly financials, compensation policies, accounts payable register, purchase card statements, and investment performance reports since the school’s inception. Documents are posted within 60 days of the issuance of data.

Indicator 10.f. Reserves: The school has access to reserves or can raise cash if a budget shortfall occurs or to finance growth.

10.f.1. Reserves: The school has adequate TABOR reserve/assets and two months or more of cash on hand to cover operating expenses. The school has the ability to reduce expenses/spending mid-year should the need arise.

10.f.2. Growth: The school has effectively planned for growth in enrollment, program offerings, and/or facility. Funding campaigns, reserve planning, and financing endeavors have exceeded expectations.

Indicator 10.g. Board Responsibility: The Governing Board and administrators hold themselves responsible for the school’s financial stability and integrity.

10.g.1. Board Expertise: The board has recruited highly knowledgeable board members with financial expertise. All board members are appropriately engaged and trained to provide input, oversight, and corrective action on all financial matters. All board members understand the school’s current and future financial status.

10.g.2. Reporting: On a monthly basis, the board receives financial statements (including revenue and expense and budget to actual reports) from the administration, board treasurer, and finance subcommittee. The board reviews, discusses, approves, and, as necessary, makes financial decisions based on these reports. Reporting formats are consistent, accurate, and understandable. Budget narrative reports are recorded in board meeting minutes.

10.g.3. Administrator Skills and Qualifications: All key administrators are highly qualified for their positions with experience and/or education in business finance
and management. The administrative team effectively manages and operates the school within the parameters set by the budget and board financial policies.

10.g.4. Networking and Training: School leaders (board and administration) participate in training and networking opportunities, monitor financial legislation, and seek outside advice in efforts to improve financial oversight and management practices. School leaders engage in the community and/or state to bring best practices to all Colorado charter schools.

Indicator 10.h. Policies: The Governing Board has adopted policies that ensure financial health and a strong system for the timely, accurate tracking and recording of all financial data and transactions.

10.h.1. Budget Policies: The board has adopted a comprehensive set of policies, aligned to state statutes, outlining the process for budget development, revision, approval, submission to the authorizer, and ongoing monitoring.

10.h.2. Fiscal Management Policies: Comprehensive fiscal management policies written and aligned to state statutes exist to ensure compliance with all school finance laws and regulations. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated.

10.h.3. Credit Card/P-Card Policies: The school is in full compliance with all written credit card/P-card policies and procedures and written policies represent exemplary business practices (e.g. includes receipts and records, limits, approved users, payment, fees/awards).

10.h.4. Policy Compliance: The school is in compliance with all internal fiscal management and budget policies. The school regularly monitors for compliance.

10.h.5. Checks and Balances: The school has adopted a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to ensure a system of checks and balances of authority and a segregation of duties in all financial transactions. The school performs a quarterly internal audit to ensure compliance with the established system.

10.h.6. Finance Subcommittee: The board has adopted a policy for the formation of a finance subcommittee. There are goals, objectives, and reporting structures established for the finance subcommittee. The subcommittee participates in budget development and provides regular financial reports to the board. The board treasurer, administrator, and business manager/accountant participate on the finance committee.

10.h.7. Autonomy: The school has established complete financial autonomy from the authorizer and/or Educational Management Organization (EMO). When negotiating contracts with the authorizer or EMO, school leadership secures, in writing, financial autonomy.

Indicator 10.i. Business Operations: The school has established and maintains procedures for accurate and appropriate business operations.
10.i.1. Accounts Payable: The school's accounts payable register contains a reasonable number of payees, given the age and size of the school. There are no payments (other than payroll) to administrators, staff members, board members, school founders, or others closely involved with the school.

10.i.2. Record/Bookkeeping: Bookkeeping and accounting practices are effective and model best practices. Financial records are current, accurate, secure, and appropriately accessible.

10.i.3. File Security: Financial systems create the proper level of physical and digital security of financial records. The school follows a written policy to ensure a system for routine, secure back-up of electronic documents.

10.i.4. Record Retention: The school has formally adopted policies/procedures for record retention practices that meets or exceeds district, state, and federal minimum requirements, and is monitoring early set up, as well as tracking records within the plan.

10.i.5. Risk Management: The school has a complete risk coverage package that meets or exceeds recommended levels in all areas (e.g. Property, General Liability, Business Auto, Umbrella, and Workers Compensation).

10.i.6. HR Practices: School has a written plan and/or checklist that is used to monitor and maintain HR best practices that includes CBI background checks, reference checks, I-9, separate health record files, new hire reporting, current at will contracts, etc.

November 15, 2014