

**City of Baker School Board  
Special Board Meeting Agenda  
Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 6:00 P.M.  
School Board Office**

**Monique Butler, President – Presiding**

"Every child deserves a champion—an adult who will never give up on them." — Rita Pierson

**A. Meeting Commencement**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Silent Meditation
4. Pledge of Allegiance

**B. Welcome of Visitors**

**C. Approval of Agenda (Action)**

**D. Executive Session**

1. City of Baker SB vs BESE, et al, Case No 761784, 19th Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana (Executive Session)
2. City of Baker SB vs BESE, et al, Case No 761785, 19th Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana (Executive Session)

**E. Action Items-The public may comment on Action Items. Public Comment is limited to 2 minutes per individual.**

1. Consideration of authorizing special counsel to proceed on executive session items.
2. Discussion and consideration of Approval of Application for operation of Type 3 Charter conversion of existing schools.

**F. Announcements**

1. Date of Next Meeting – June 3, 2025

**G. Adjournment (Action)**



In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact Debbie Dedeaux at 225.774.5795 to describe the assistance that is necessary.



# **Charter Application**

Submitted to the City of Baker School System

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## **Executive Summary**

HCS Baton Rouge, a member of Helix Community Schools, (“Helix”) seeks to expand on the success of the network of innovative, career-focused public schools by converting two existing public schools in the Baker School District into Type 3 charter schools: **Park Ridge Academic Magnet School** and **Baker High School**. These schools will operate as part of Helix's growing network, leveraging a proven model that emphasizes Academic Excellence, Specialized Competencies for High-Demand Jobs, Social-Emotional Support through Mentoring, and Equity for All Students.

Under Helix's leadership, Park Ridge Academic Magnet School will expand its enrollment to serve more students in Kindergarten through 8th grade and will be open to all students residing within Baker. Baker High School will continue its long tradition of serving students in grades 9 through 12, maintaining its role as the city's comprehensive public high school. Enrollment will incrementally expand to accommodate community demand, with detailed yearly projections ensuring sustainable growth and optimal student-to-teacher ratios.

Consistent with the Helix model, both schools will introduce a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) focus across all grade levels. In addition to strengthening the core academic program, Helix will develop specialized concentrations at each school in Financial Technology (FinTech) and Performing Arts. These programs will offer students exposure to emerging career pathways and creative industries, preparing them for success in both college and high-demand careers.

By converting these schools into Type 3 charters, Helix will significantly enhance educational opportunities for Baker students, aligning with key objectives of Louisiana's Charter School Law and Bulletin 126. This initiative will result in improved student learning outcomes, increased access to innovative educational practices, and greater educational equity. Helix's demonstrated success, particularly with economically disadvantaged populations, positions it to effectively elevate academic performance, enhance career readiness, and foster emotional and social well-being among students.

The schools will primarily serve the local Baker community, which includes a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Key challenges include gaps in academic achievement, limited access to specialized and career-focused educational pathways, and insufficient social-emotional resources. Helix will directly address these challenges by expanding academic programming, introducing specialized concentrations in Financial Technology (FinTech) and Performing Arts, and implementing comprehensive social-emotional mentoring programs.

As Helix expands, we will face similar challenges to any school, such as recruiting top faculty and staff, and in providing additional support for our unique population. As a network, we are well-equipped to deal with these challenges. Over the years, we have refined a process whereby we anticipate challenges, set clear goals, and use data to continuously reflect on and refine our strategies. The pages below detail our approach to this method. Finally, we emphasize Helix's commitment to equity and opportunity for all students. Helix schools will always remain non-selective for all programs. We believe that our school models offer innovative approaches to delivering a high-quality education and that all students should be able to access them, regardless of past academic performance. Helix is excited to champion these unique opportunities for the children of Baker and to expand on our commitment to prepare all students for the high-demand jobs of tomorrow. We look forward to partnering with the City of Baker School Board and System.

## **School Establishment**

### *Student and Community Overview*

Baker, Louisiana, is a predominantly African American community with approximately 86.7% of its population identifying as Black or African American. The city faces significant socioeconomic challenges, with a poverty rate of 22.2% and a median household income of \$59,451, which is below the state average<sup>1</sup>. These factors contribute to educational disparities, making Baker an ideal location for Helix to implement its proven model aimed at closing achievement gaps and providing equitable educational opportunities. These demographics highlight a community that is underserved and in need of targeted educational interventions. The selection of Baker is driven by the commitment to address these disparities and provide high-quality educational opportunities tailored to the unique needs of this population. The goal is to empower students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in a rapidly evolving global economy.

The performance of local schools in Baker underscores the urgent need for educational reform. For instance, Baker High School has faced challenges in improving student outcomes. The school's performance has been ranked in the lower percentiles statewide, reflecting ongoing difficulties in meeting educational standards. These performance metrics highlight the necessity for innovative educational models that can effectively address the academic needs of students in Baker.

A review of Louisiana state data indicates that approximately 12 to 15 percent of students statewide qualify for special education services. Helix anticipates a similar percentage of students enrolled at Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School will require specialized support. In response, Helix is fully committed to ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Both schools will develop and implement Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) tailored to the specific academic and behavioral needs of each student with disabilities. These programs will be delivered through a continuum of services supported by trained special education professionals, paraprofessionals, and intervention specialists. The goal is to ensure all students have equitable access to a rigorous education and the opportunity to achieve academic growth.

Given the demographics of the Baker community—where an estimated 99.5% of households speak English as their primary language—the percentage of English Learners (ELs) is expected to be minimal, likely below one percent. Nevertheless, Helix will proactively prepare for and accommodate any English Learners who enroll. Both schools will be equipped with resources and trained staff to provide targeted language acquisition support. Services may include small group instruction, embedded language supports within core content areas, and access to supplemental instructional materials to support English language development. These strategies will ensure that all English Learners can meaningfully participate in the academic program and progress toward full English proficiency.

Though specific local data on homeless students in Baker is limited, state averages suggest that approximately two to three percent of students may experience homelessness at some point during the school year. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by students in unstable living situations, Helix will implement systems to identify and support homeless students in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This will include ensuring immediate enrollment, waiving typical documentation requirements when necessary, and connecting students and families with appropriate transportation services, school supplies, and social service referrals. Dedicated student support personnel will monitor the academic and social-emotional well-being of homeless students

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<sup>1</sup> [https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2203985-baker-la/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US2203985-baker-la/?utm_source=chatgpt.com).

to ensure continuity of learning and access to a safe, supportive school environment.

### *Community Engagement and Support*

Helix has undertaken meaningful engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders in the Baker community to inform the development of the proposed school conversions. Outreach efforts have included targeted engagement of parents, educators, and community leaders. Parents and guardians were invited to participate in surveys and town hall meetings to share their perspectives on existing educational challenges and to provide input on the type of learning environment they wish to see for their children. Many voiced a desire for stronger academic supports and expanded opportunities.

Helix also held in-depth conversations with current educators and staff from Baker schools to better understand the strengths and limitations of current instructional and support systems. These discussions offered valuable insight into school climate, student needs, and operational challenges, all of which have informed the proposed academic and staffing model. Engagement with community leaders, including local clergy and city officials, has been central to assessing the broader educational and economic considerations of the community. These leaders emphasized the need for high-quality educational opportunities that can retain families within the district and prepare students for meaningful post-secondary success.

To gather broader input and promote transparency, Helix utilized a variety of outreach strategies, including town hall meetings and surveys. Through these comprehensive engagement efforts, Helix has built a foundation of support among families, educators, and civic leaders who share a commitment to expanding access to high-quality, equitable public education in Baker.

Helix proposes to convert Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School into Type 3 charter schools, implementing a STEAM-focused curriculum with specialized concentrations in Financial Technology and Performing Arts. This approach is designed to provide students with real-world learning experiences, preparing them for success in college, careers, and leadership roles. By leveraging Helix's proven strategies, including data-driven instruction and personalized student support, the proposed schools aim to outperform existing local schools and better serve the community's educational needs. The integration of specialized programs will offer students exposure to emerging industries, fostering skills that are critical in the modern workforce.

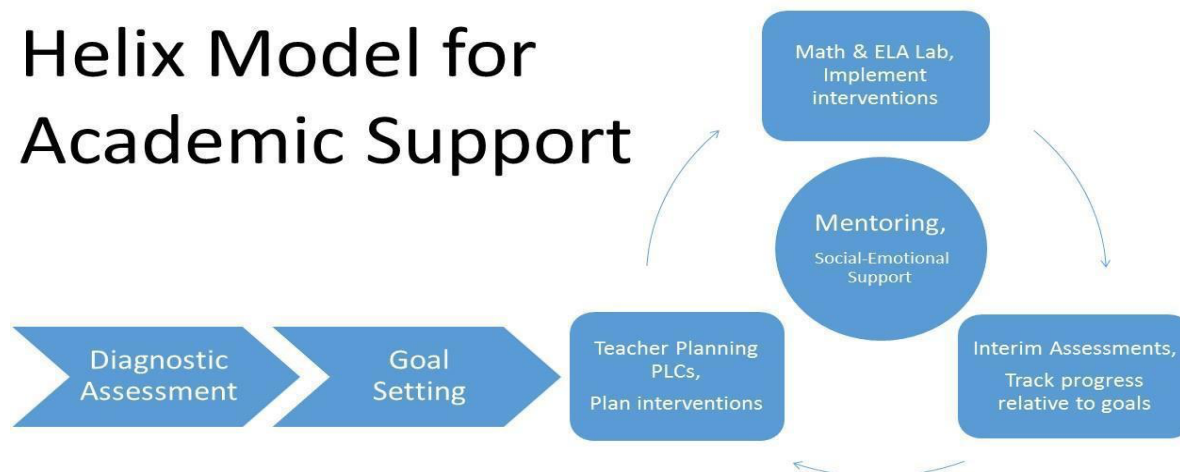
## **Academic Plan, Assessments, and Goals**

### *Systems to Set and Measure Progress Towards Goals*

Helix's approach to preparing our students for academic excellence is grounded in a deep respect for the utility of data to drive progress toward ambitious goals. To achieve these goals, we deliberately chart a path, with specific time-bound benchmarks, for students to make progress from where they are to where they need to be. Along this path, we regularly collect and analyze data to plan and execute individually tailored interventions to keep students on course to achieving their

goals. Our structure for goal setting and support is composed of six primary systems:

# Helix Model for Academic Support



Diagnostic data is collected over the summer and then used to set specific progress goals for individual students. These goals are set relative to the 'growth to mastery' benchmarks for individual students. Once individual progress goals are set, teachers are able to plan appropriate interventions and implement these interventions during Lab periods that are structured around differentiation and RTI. Progress is assessed through interim assessments, as well as more regular curricular and STAR 360 assessments. The data from these assessments is then analyzed in data-driven PLC meetings. The cycle then repeats. These systems are discussed in more detail below.

**Diagnostic Assessment:** To give teachers and students adequate time to set appropriate goals and plan initial support strategies, Helix schools gather baseline diagnostic data over the summer on 'Discovery Days'. Students take a combination of LEAP 360 diagnostic and Star 360 assessments in grades K-8 while high school students take NWEA MAP and ACT practice assessments. Teachers then use this data, along with the previous spring's state assessment data, to set long and short-term progress goals for students during their summer in-service. Gathering this diagnostic assessment over the summer is beneficial as students are able to start the school year receiving tailored instruction and interventions on day one.

Goal Setting: Once diagnostic data is collected, it is used to set goals at grade, class, and individual student levels. The first goals are focused on individual students and are crafted relative to what students will need to accomplish to excel. Specifically, they are oriented to the following expectations:

- 1) all students will demonstrate 'Proficiency' on state math and ELA assessments by their third year at a Helix school or hit their 'growth to mastery' target each year until mastery is achieved.
- 2) students who are more than two years below grade level will gain at least two grade levels each year until on grade level, and
- 3) all other students will gain at least 1.5 grade levels per year. Metrics for the first goal are set using the 'growth to mastery' target for each individual student. Metrics for the second and third goals are set using Star 360 scores on benchmark assessments. During summer in-service, teachers can look at students' diagnostic and state assessment data to backwards plan from these end goals to establish interim benchmark goals for each student. These goals help provide clarity and context for students, teachers, and families, making clear to everyone

where we are, where we need to go, and how we're going to get there.

Professional Learning Communities: Teachers meet in content specific Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) twice per week and grade level PLC's once per month. To ensure these meetings are efficient and purposeful, instructional leaders take part in PLC trainings through Solution Tree to learn and adopt best practices. Every other week PLC meetings are dedicated to student work and data analysis. During this time, teachers analyze data at the grade, class, and student level to determine the standards and supporting skills to be targeted for intervention. Teachers are then able to plan tailored strategies for implementation during Math and ELA Lab blocks.

Interim Assessments: It is critical to regularly monitor students' progress toward their goals to ensure students remain on track for success. The Helix assessment calendar is anchored by LEAP 360 assessments, which include an initial diagnostic and three interim assessments over the course of the year. These assessments directly align to Louisiana state assessments. Between interim assessments, teachers monitor data garnered from assessments given as part of the Tier 1 curricula in core subjects as well as Star 360 benchmark assessments. The combination of LEAP 360, Star 360, and curricular assessments allow teachers to receive regular insight into student progress and content mastery. Teachers then analyze this data and plan appropriate interventions in their PLC meetings.

Math and ELA Labs: Two to three times per week, students' Math and ELA class periods are conducted in a lab model where the classroom is entirely differentiated to each students' unique needs. Students who are above grade level engage in extension and enrichment activities while students who are struggling academically receive targeted intervention in the areas that teachers have identified through data analysis in PLC's. Interventions can take various forms, including teacher-led small groups working on areas of common weakness, research-based, standards-aligned personalized learning tools, such as Zearn or Study Island, or formal RTI. All students engage with rigorous grade-level content, getting additional support where they need it the most, whether those needs be for remediation or acceleration.

Mentoring: Helix understands that school is as much an emotional experience as it is an academic one. For this reason, we prioritize social-emotional development and support for students through a focus on mentoring and dedicate time to discussions of students' social-emotional needs. At monthly grade-level PLCs, there is time allotted for discussion of individual students' social-emotional health. Teachers can discuss students who have exhibited unproductive behavior in class or whose behavior may be influenced by social dynamics unrelated to academic proficiency. These conversations are led by a school counselor, who is a full-time staff member. Teachers and counselors are then able to plan for social-emotional support conversations with students to help them navigate the issues they are facing. These supports are beneficial, but they also serve the end of supporting student persistence. Especially in high school, these supports positively impact graduation rates and serve as a strategy to ensure Helix high schools will continue to excel with 'A' level ratings for graduation rate.

In addition to our dedication to academic excellence in core subjects, Helix schools are defined by our commitment to cultivating experiences and competencies related to jobs in high-demand fields. STEAM based opportunities at existing Helix schools include courses in digital media, engineering, and robotics. Students' dedication to these courses and the quality of their work is what truly sets Helix schools apart. These industry-specific courses and experiences allow students to engage in project-based learning. The emphasis on inquiry and applied knowledge through project-based learning is central to the academic experience of students at Helix schools. The assessments for these courses are built around demonstrations of knowledge that emphasize the application of increasingly complex competencies. Project-based learning experiences further expand the



opportunities students have by allowing them to refine their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills through real world applications of high-demand skills.

STEAM, FinTech, and Performing Arts Competencies: Helix will implement a comprehensive academic model at both Park Ridge and Baker High that integrates STEAM education, Financial Technology (FinTech), and Performing Arts as central pillars of the student experience. This model is designed to foster creativity, analytical thinking, and technical fluency across all grade levels, while preparing students for college and high-demand careers in an increasingly interdisciplinary global economy.

At Park Ridge, students in grades K–8 will build foundational skills in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics through the nationally recognized Project Lead The Way (PLTW) curriculum. This hands-on, project-based learning program exposes students to the fundamentals of coding, robotics, engineering design, and digital storytelling from the earliest grades. In the upper elementary and middle school grades, students will engage in more complex PLTW designed to reinforce core content standards while developing real-world problem-solving skills.

In addition to STEAM, Park Ridge will introduce students to the concepts and applications of Financial Technology in age-appropriate ways—such as digital budgeting games, introduction to online marketplaces, and early coding tools for simulations—laying the foundation for future specialization in financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and technology. Simultaneously, students will have structured exposure to Performing Arts, including music, visual arts, dance, and theater. These experiences will not only support creativity and self-expression but will also help students develop discipline, confidence, and communication skills, which are essential across all STEAM-related fields.

At Baker High School, students will continue and deepen their engagement in both STEAM and the school's two specialized concentrations: Financial Technology and Performing Arts. High school students will have the opportunity to enroll in advanced PLTW courses aligned to Louisiana's Jump Start and TOPS University diploma pathways.

In the FinTech concentration, students will explore the intersection of finance and technology by learning about digital currencies, data analytics, coding for financial applications, and the ethics of online banking. Courses will integrate economics, business math, and introductory programming skills, culminating in opportunities for dual enrollment, internships with local financial institutions, and industry-based credentialing.

In the Performing Arts concentration, students will explore stagecraft, digital music production, film and media studies, and performance techniques across disciplines. They will also engage in cross-curricular projects that bring together art, technology, and storytelling, developing multimedia portfolios that reflect both artistic talent and technical literacy.

Both schools will provide dedicated instructional time, staff, and resources to support the integration of these pathways. This approach ensures that all students—regardless of background—have equitable access to rigorous academic experiences that prepare them for success in college, creative industries, and the evolving world of technology-driven careers.

Professional Exposure: To bridge academic instruction with real-world relevance, Helix will provide students at both Park Ridge and Baker High with ongoing, structured exposure to professionals, industries, and organizations aligned with each school's STEAM, Financial Technology, and Performing Arts concentrations.

At Park Ridge, students in grades K–8 will participate in career exploration activities that integrate age-appropriate exposure to high-growth professions. These activities may include guest visits from engineers, artists, financial professionals, coders, and healthcare providers, as well as off-campus field trips to interactive museums, technology companies, and performance venues. Students will engage in hands-on learning such as basic coding projects, design challenges, and introductory financial literacy games that help them connect their academic learning to real-world applications and careers.

At Baker High School, students will experience more advanced and targeted professional exposure aligned with their chosen academic pathways. In the Financial Technology concentration, students will visit financial institutions, fintech companies, and business incubators to learn about emerging financial systems, entrepreneurship, and data-driven decision-making. Through partnerships with local banks and business leaders, students will also participate in hands-on learning experiences.

In the Performing Arts concentration, students will attend performances and tours at theaters, studios, and cultural institutions. Professional artists, producers, and other creatives will be invited to campus to expose students to concepts such as stage design, lighting, digital music production, and storytelling. Students will participate in hands-on workshops and collaborative projects that encourage creative expression while also introducing them to the technical skills necessary for performing arts and media careers.

Across both schools, these professional exposure opportunities will be thoughtfully integrated into the school calendar and academic programming, ensuring that all students—regardless of background—have access to engaging, career-connected learning experiences. These activities are designed to broaden students’ understanding of available pathways, inspire future career exploration, and cultivate a sense of purpose and possibility connected to their classroom learning. Helix will track and report participation in internships and professional exposure activities as part of its overall accountability system. These data points will complement academic indicators and provide meaningful insight into how well the schools are preparing students for life beyond graduation.

### *Quality Curriculum & Aligned Assessments*

A quality curriculum is the foundation of a student’s learning experience. The Helix team considered five primary variables when vetting curricula: 1) Tier 1 designation by LDOE, 2) alignment with the unique aspects of our mission, 3) opportunities for ongoing professional development, 4) depth and clarity of supporting resources, and 5) ability to differentiate to support for students with special needs and English Language Learners. After analysis of Tier 1 designated curricula for core subjects and intensive research into other K-12 STEAM-based curricula, Helix made the following choices:

| Grade Levels       | Curriculum          | Grade Levels   | Curriculum |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|
| <b>Mathematics</b> |                     | <b>Science</b> |            |
| K-5                | Eureka Math w/Zearn | K-8            | Amplify    |

|                              |                      |                                    |  |
|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 6-12                         | Eureka Math          | 9-12                               | Helix Science Curriculum aligned to Next Generation Science Standards            |
| <b>English Language Arts</b> |                      | <b>Social Studies</b>              |  |
| K-8                          | Wit & Wisdom         | K-3                                | Helix Social Studies Curriculum aligned to LA GLEs, Wit & Wisdom Themes          |
| 9-12                         | HMH Collections      | 4-12                               | Helix Social Studies curriculum supplemented by The DBQ Project and AP Resources |
| <b>STEAM</b>                 |                      | <b>FinTech and Performing Arts</b> |  |
| K-8                          | Project Lead The Way | 9-12                               | FinTech/Performing Arts Curriculum   |

## Mathematics

### Grades K-5: Eureka Math with Zearn Supporting

Eureka Math, a Great Minds curriculum, aligns to Helix's emphasis on molding students as 'sense makers' to support the development of their critical thinking and problem solving skills. The curriculum is scaffolded strategically to help students develop a holistic command of mathematics. Another advantage to Eureka Math is the depth and clarity of supporting resources. Eureka provides detailed guides for how it is to be implemented effectively and regular professional development opportunities exist around the region for both teachers and leaders. An added benefit is that Eureka also includes materials that can be used for English Language Learners so that language gaps do not manifest as gaps in mathematical understanding. Helix provides training and ongoing development of teachers and leaders to ensure faithful and effective execution of this curriculum.

Students will also have the opportunity to use Zearn Math in support of the Eureka curriculum. Zearn is a K-5 math curriculum based on Eureka Math / EngageNY with top-rated materials for teacher-led and digital instruction. Zearn is designed to support a differentiated classroom and will assist teachers in remediating instruction for students with unique needs as well as accelerate learning for those immediately mastering introduced content. Throughout the lesson, students rotate through different experiences; one-to-one engagement through a high-quality computer program that self-differentiates to remediate the needs of each individual student, small group instruction with the teacher, and whole class activities. The online component produces in-depth reports on what students are learning and what they are struggling with, producing data at the school, grade, class, and individual levels. Both programs provide a well-designed balance between conceptual understanding and procedural fluency to ensure that students not only learn 'how' to solve math problems but have a clear understanding of exactly how mathematical concepts are applied in problem solving..

For interim assessments, students will take the three LEAP 360 math assessments, which can be aligned to the Eureka Math curriculum map. Teachers will also make use of the module assessments included in the Eureka Math curriculum as well as the data tracking that occurs automatically as students move through Zearn to track student progress between interim assessments. Data from these assessments and reports will be analyzed in weekly PLC meetings and be used to remediate content and design targeted interventions to be implemented during Math Lab blocks.

#### Grades 6-12: Eureka Math

Eureka Math for grades 6-12 is a Tier 1 curriculum aligned with the Louisiana State Standards. In grades 6-12, students will continue to use Eureka Math, allowing students to get the full continuum of benefits of this well-designed, research-supported curriculum. Eureka is built strategically so that concepts build off of each other, spiraling from year to year.

Teachers will use the LEAP 360 assessments as interim benchmarks and will track student mastery using Eureka module assessments. Data from these assessments will be analyzed in weekly PLC meetings and be used to remediate content and design targeted interventions to be implemented during Math Lab blocks. For grades 10-12, students will also take ACT practice assessments as benchmarks of their progress.

### **English Language Arts**

#### Grades K-8: Wit & Wisdom

Wit & Wisdom, a Great Minds curriculum, is a Tier 1 curriculum aligned with the Louisiana State Standards. Wit & Wisdom uses authentic texts to develop critical readers who can analyze, write, and discuss what they learn. Topics addressed through texts are spiraled through the grade levels to deepen and reinforce key content knowledge around a range of critical topics, like the American Revolution. Wit & Wisdom's rigor and commitment to culturally relevant content directly aligns with Helix's commitment to equity and conviction that all students deserve the opportunity to learn at the highest levels. All students read the same texts with supports for struggling readers built in throughout the lesson. Rather than lowering expectations for students, deepening the gap in achievement outcomes, Wit & Wisdom is designed to support all students to reach the same high expectations.

As with Eureka, Wit & Wisdom resources are readily accessible and there are ample opportunities for ongoing professional development. Helix supports the training and ongoing development of teachers and leaders to ensure faithful and effective execution of this curriculum.

Teachers will use the LEAP 360 assessments as interim benchmarks and will gauge mastery of content between interims through the Wit & Wisdom curricular assessments and Star 360. Data from these assessments will be analyzed in weekly PLC meetings and be used to remediate content and design targeted interventions to be implemented during ELA Lab blocks.

#### Grades 9-12: HMH Collections

HMH Collections is a Tier 1 curriculum aligned to the Louisiana State Standards for high school English Language Arts. Collections prioritizes critical reading of texts and using evidence to develop reasoning and communication skills. The supporting materials provide clear guidance, but also allow room for teachers to adapt the lessons and texts to their particular students, an element of flexibility that is especially important in high school. In addition to options for differentiation according to interest, it also includes resources specifically for English Learners.

The professional development support for Collections is also substantial. There are trainings at the

'getting started' level as well as ongoing support, and even the option for in-class coaching around how to effectively execute the curriculum.

For assessment, teachers will use the LEAP 360 interim assessment as well as the assessments included in the Collections curriculum. Data from these assessments will be analyzed in the monthly data PLC meetings and be used to design targeted interventions to classrooms and individual students to be implemented during ELA Lab blocks.

## **Science**

### Grades K-8: Amplify Science

The Amplify Science curriculum was chosen for its alignment to the Helix commitments to application and investigation. Amplify is a research backed curriculum where units are built around investigations into real world problems. The curriculum also prioritizes opportunities for students to collaborate as they explore hands-on experiences and involves reading and writing tasks that are designed to reinforce ELA skills and critical thinking. Students also learn how to use digital tools to support their inquiry, an increasingly important skill set to facilitate the application of knowledge. Through Amplify, students will learn how to ask questions and reason systematically from observations. Students learn about science while also learning what it means to be scientists. This approach fits with the Helix model and further reinforces the types of critical thinking valued at Helix schools.

For assessment, teachers will use unit assessments and project-based rubric assessments included with the curriculum. Data from these assessments will be analyzed in the monthly data PLC meetings and be used to inform coaching and feedback as students move through the curriculum.

### Grades 9-12: Helix Science Curricula

Helix is still exploring options for a science curriculum for the proposed high schools. In the absence of a state designated Tier 1 curriculum for high school science, Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy currently uses a school developed curriculum aligned to Louisiana State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. However, once a Tier 1 list for high school science curriculums is created, we intend to shift the science instruction at all Helix schools to the newly designated Tier 1 curriculums.

## **Social Studies**

### Grades K-3: Helix Elementary Social Studies Curriculum

Helix will adopt a Tier 1 curriculum for Social Studies aligned with topics discussed in concurrent Wit & Wisdom units to further deepen context and content knowledge related to understanding the ELA texts.

### Grades 4-12: Helix Social Studies, The DBQ Project & AP Resources

Resources from The DBQ project will be used to support a Helix developed Social Studies curriculum from fourth grade through graduation. The DBQ Project has been designated as a Tier 1 supplemental resource, but at this time, there are no comprehensive curriculums with this status. For grades 4-8, Helix will design a Social Studies curriculum that is aligned to the new Louisiana State Standards and supports the thematic topics in the Wit & Wisdom curriculum. High School students will also benefit from resources from Advanced Placement resources for relevant courses.

The priorities in Social Studies instruction are for students to be able to analyze sources to construct meaning and to communicate effectively both verbally and through writing.

Helix schools are also defined by our commitment to cultivating experiences and competencies related to jobs in high-demand fields. This means opportunities to engage in STEAM-related competencies at both new schools with focus on agriculture, healthcare, artificial intelligence, and energy respectively. To reinforce our commitment to professional competencies in high-demand fields, we will use the curricula outlined below.

## **STEAM**

### Grades K-8: Project Lead The Way

Project Lead The Way is a nationally recognized curriculum focused on coding, engineering, and collaborative problem solving, designed by professionals in education, science, engineering, and the medical industries. The curriculum is designed to align with the Common Core State Standards for Math and ELA as well as the Next Generation Science Standards.

Through Project Lead the Way, students engage in “hands-on activities, projects, and problems; empowering them to solve real-world challenges, and inspiring them to reimagine how they see themselves.” By the time students are in middle school, they design robots and construct environmentally sustainable buildings, all in a way that directly reinforces CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards.

The assessments for this course are holistic and rigorous. The curriculum assesses student progress through classroom activities, projects, and problems; maintaining logs, notebooks, and portfolios that undergo assessment; and evaluating work through a range of tools, such as performance rubrics and reflective questioning, to deepen and expand their knowledge and skills.

This curriculum, in conjunction with rigorous core subject experiences, will prepare our students for the jobs of tomorrow. Access to this curriculum is especially important for our target student population, which is majority African American and economically disadvantaged. Both of these groups are dramatically underrepresented in STEAM fields. Providing low-income students of color, especially girls, access to knowledge and skill competencies that will prepare them to excel in STEAM fields is critical to our mission at Helix Community Schools. Once students matriculate to high school, they will continue their STEAM pathway with Project Lead The Way and specialize in the respective disciplines of artificial intelligence, healthcare, agriculture, or energy.

### *Systems for Teacher Support & Ongoing Professional Development*

A deep commitment to teachers’ ongoing support and professional development is central to our academic vision. We believe that teachers deserve to be supported in what they are being asked to do, and we are proud of the ways our current staff embraces a culture of continuous improvement. Our larger professional development structure is composed of five primary systems. Across all of these systems, the initial and primary focus is on ensuring teachers have a deep and comprehensive knowledge of the curriculum they are implementing.

Summer In-Service: During the week-long summer in-service, teachers are introduced to the systems of the school and have a chance to develop a strong staff culture through team building activities. But the heart of the in-service is the time dedicated to curriculum training and strategies to support students who have a heightened need for intervention. While day one of the in-service is focused on team building and school systems, day two is dedicated to a comprehensive

curriculum training from a vendor approved certified trainer. The following two days, teachers are then able to apply the learnings from that training as they work through their scope and sequence documents and gain clarity on the cumulative experience and details of the selected curricula for both themselves and their students. The final day of in-service is focused on intervention and remediation strategies for students with disabilities, English Learners, and students who are more than two grade levels behind.

Walkthroughs: Regular walkthroughs are an integral part of the Helix model. An extensive body of research has shown that administrative support is, by far, the number one factor for teacher satisfaction, and research into administrative support has shown that, especially in high-poverty schools, teachers value emotional support even more than instructional support. These regular walkthroughs are how Helix provides this emotional support. Teachers who receive regular check-ins, and who feel connected to their administrators, are often more receptive to more formal professional development and coaching conversations. These walkthroughs generally consist of just a 5-10 min observation followed by a quick debrief conversation or note that highlights what the teacher is doing well and specific ways the teacher has grown. A teacher can expect to see their administrator in their classroom for one of these walkthroughs at least once per week. While not the central point of these walkthroughs, these observations can also serve to provide qualitative data to inform a future coaching conversation.

Observation & Coaching Cycles: All teachers engage in formal, data-driven, coaching cycles with an administrator at least every 6 weeks, and more as necessary. Observations are done using a combination of the COMPASS rubric, and curriculum guidelines, as they relate to the lesson plan for that particular day. Prior to the observation, the administrator also pulls the teachers' student performance data from the most recent assessment so that this data is able to inform the conversation. Following the observation, there is a structured coaching conversation that covers general teaching strategies and fidelity to the adopted curriculum. This conversation is then anchored in the teacher's student performance data. While all teachers take part in these coaching cycles every six weeks, teachers whose student data is significantly lagging the performance benchmarks will have coaching conversations more frequently. Teachers leave these conversations knowing what they are doing well and also with 2-3 areas of growth and specific action items to address these areas of growth. These 'glows and grows' are then recorded and tracked so that they can be referred to in both walkthroughs and future formal observations. At the end of the year, all teachers can see a documented record of their growth and development.

Professional Learning Communities: Twice a week, teachers engage in professional learning communities by subject. While one out of every four subject-specific PLCs focuses on data analysis and planning interventions, the majority of subject-specific PLC meetings focus on teacher professional development and curriculum alignment. These PLC meetings follow a professional learning calendar that ensures PLCs are purposeful and productive and that teachers have the ability to continuously grow as professionals. Once every six weeks this calendar prioritizes professional development related to supporting students with disabilities, English Learners, and students who continue to lag more than two grade levels behind. The core of these tailored sessions is to ensure that teachers do not lower expectations for students in these groups but rather provide the needed supports to accommodate them.

External Professional Development Experiences: Helix is also committed to ensuring teachers and administrators are able to participate in professional development experiences outside of the school. As opportunities arise for teachers to deepen their understanding on topics they are interested in, and as the school identifies mission-aligned priorities that could require external professional development, we will always make an effort to fund participation in external professional development opportunities. For example, we are committed to send teachers to relevant Project Lead The Way, Great Minds, and HMH Collections trainings at least once per

year and more frequently as they are available. These opportunities provide the added benefit of allowing teachers and administrators to interact with other educators doing similar work in other schools and to exchange ideas and experiences.

The Helix support and professional development approach for teachers is an in-depth and comprehensive experience. We believe that the whole of this experience is greater than the sum of its parts. Teachers not only grow professionally, they begin to feel like a family. They begin to live out a culture of excellence and continuous improvement that extends to the interactions between their students and into the larger Helix community.

### **Academic Performance**

Helix Community Schools currently operates three public charter schools in East Baton Rouge Parish: Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy, Helix Aviation Academy, and Helix Legal Academy. Performance across these schools reflects a combination of past academic strength, emerging improvements, and clear evidence of capacity to drive gains in underserved student populations.

Helix is proud to have been the first charter school in Baton Rouge to receive approval from the Louisiana State Bond Commission for tax exempt bond financing. In 2021, Helix STEAM Properties successfully secured more than \$10,000,000 in financing to acquire a six-story building in downtown Baton Rouge for Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy. Similarly, in 2020, Helix developed a unique partnership with the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport and the City of Baton Rouge to secure a new facility for Helix Aviation Academy, which is the only K12 school located on a regional airport in the state of Louisiana and one of only two in the entire country. The school building has a 10,000-sf hangar that opens to the Baton Rouge Airport where live aircraft are able to enter the school directly from the airport's runways and taxiways. As a result of these school facilities, Helix Aviation Academy has hosted a variety of aircraft, including airplanes, jets, helicopters, and drones at the school.

In addition to Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy and Helix Aviation Academy, Helix Community Schools successfully launched Helix Legal Academy in the Fall of 2021. It is also located in downtown Baton Rouge. A one-of-kind Louisiana school, Helix Legal Academy's building is host to the Southern University Law Center's downtown campus and evening program. Helix Legal Academy builds upon the special partnership that Helix and Southern University have enjoyed in the capital city for many years.

Our commitment to a culture of continuous improvement is evidenced in our data. Since graduating our first class of Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy students in 2014, no other high school in EBR has shown as much growth in SPS scores as Helix Mentorship. This ability to show substantial growth, while serving a population that is over 80% economically disadvantaged, is unique in Baton Rouge.

Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy has historically served as the network's flagship high school. From 2018 to 2019, it saw a dramatic rise in School Performance Score (SPS), earning recognition as a statistical outlier for high-poverty schools. Its 2019 SPS of 69.2 was 2.4 standard deviations above the mean for high schools serving over 80% low-income students. While performance has declined modestly since then—earning a recent SPS of 65.7 in 2024—the school remains one of the strongest-performing high schools in Baton Rouge with a similar student demographic. It continues to post strong graduation outcomes (91% cohort graduation rate) and a high Strength of Diploma index (94.5), indicating success in preparing students for post-secondary pathways.

Helix Aviation Academy has shown the most impressive academic growth in recent years. Between 2023 and 2024, the school improved its SPS by over 13 points—from 55.1 to 68.3—



raising its letter grade from a D to a C. The school earned an A rating in the state's Progress Index, demonstrating that students are making significant year-over-year academic gains. This progress is especially meaningful given the school's expansion into upper grades and reflects the successful implementation of Helix's instructional model and intervention strategies. Helix Legal Academy has also begun to show signs of early improvement, with an SPS increase from 41.2 in 2023 to 49.6 in 2024—an 8.4-point gain in a single year. The school's increase in Progress Index (C rating) mirrors the early patterns of improvement seen at Aviation and demonstrates that early interventions are beginning to take hold.

Helix schools predominantly serve students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, with over 90% of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch. Additionally, approximately 12 to 15% of enrolled students receive special education services. Helix Aviation's A-rated Progress Index and the consistent growth shown at Mentorship indicate that students from these subgroups are making meaningful academic progress. The upward movement of assessment indices across campuses suggests that interventions and support strategies are reaching students who need them most.

Under Louisiana Bulletin 126, §1305, charter operators seeking to expand must demonstrate strong performance in their existing schools. Helix Mentorship meets this requirement based on its sustained record of success, including high graduation outcomes and diploma strength. Helix Aviation also qualifies, having earned a C letter grade in 2024 with an A in the Progress Index, validating its rapid and continued improvement. Therefore, Helix meets the criteria for replication based on the performance of two eligible schools.

To improve, Helix has implemented network-wide academic and operational strategies. Instructional coaching has been intensified across all schools, with academic leaders providing hands-on support to teachers in core content areas. These leaders conduct regular data reviews, co-plan lessons, and facilitate targeted professional development aligned with Louisiana's academic standards.

To strengthen curriculum consistency and ensure alignment to the state's accountability framework, Helix adopted Tier 1 Louisiana Department of Education-approved instructional materials across all grade levels. These include comprehensive ELA and math curricula that embed formative assessments and allow for more effective differentiation.

Helix also invested in a robust interim assessment system that includes LEAP and curriculum-based measures. These tools enable school leaders and instructional teams to closely monitor student progress, identify learning gaps early, and adjust instructional plans accordingly. The increased use of real-time data has played a pivotal role in turning around performance at Helix Aviation and sustaining college- and career-readiness outcomes at Mentorship.

From a staffing standpoint, Helix has prioritized recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and support personnel, including certified interventionists, academic counselors, and special education coordinators. These team members provide direct, small-group academic support and ensure that students with diverse learning needs are served effectively.

The data across previous academic years clearly support Helix's capacity to open and sustain additional schools. Helix Mentorship continues to outperform high-poverty schools statewide in graduation and diploma metrics. Helix Aviation has made extraordinary gains, improving both its academic letter grade and overall performance profile within a short period of time. These results validate the strength of the Helix academic model and its adaptability to new settings and student populations.

The proposed new schools will benefit from direct leadership support and network resources that have driven success at Mentorship and Aviation. Additionally, lessons learned from initial implementation challenges—particularly related to instructional consistency and progress monitoring—have already informed stronger onboarding systems and more responsive school-level supports.

Helix’s vision for expansion is grounded in a proven track record, strengthened by a thoughtful approach to continuous improvement. With a clear academic model, demonstrated capacity for school turnaround, and a leadership team that has guided measurable gains in underserved communities, Helix is well-positioned to replicate its success and bring high-quality educational options to students in the City of Baker.

### **Growth Plan**

#### *Promotion and Graduation Policy*

The proposed schools—Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School—will follow the same promotion and graduation policies used across the Helix network. Promotion for students in grades K–8 will be based on mastery of grade-level content, student growth as measured by benchmark assessments, and teacher recommendations. High school students will be subject to Louisiana’s statewide graduation requirements, including credit accumulation, end-of-course assessments, and participation in required testing (e.g., ACT). Additionally, Helix places a strong emphasis on strength of diploma indicators, such as dual enrollment credits and industry-based credentials, and will continue to prioritize those in both new campuses. No changes to current promotion or graduation policies are anticipated.

#### *Instructional Leadership Roles*

The new schools will adopt the same instructional leadership model that has driven improvements across existing Helix schools. Each campus will be led by a Principal supported by one or more Assistant Principals (depending on enrollment size), a Dean of Academics, and instructional coaches who focus on teacher development, lesson quality, and data-informed instruction. These leaders will receive direct supervision from the Regional Chief Academic Officer and Director of Achievement and will participate in a network-wide leadership cohort that meets regularly to share data, calibrate on instructional expectations, and receive professional development.

#### *Hiring Process*

The hiring process for the Baker schools will mirror that of existing Helix schools. All instructional and administrative staff will be recruited through a rigorous process that includes screening for cultural alignment, interviews with school and network leaders, and demonstration lessons or performance tasks where appropriate. Administrative leaders must demonstrate successful prior leadership experience, deep instructional knowledge, and a commitment to continuous improvement. As with existing campuses, all hiring decisions will be made collaboratively between the school principal and the network leadership team to ensure alignment with the organization’s mission and instructional vision.

#### *Food Services and Transportation*

Helix is currently evaluating options for food service and transportation with the intent to align as closely as possible with existing operational practices. The goal is to ensure continuity and minimize disruption for students and families. While final options are currently being reviewed in collaboration with local stakeholders, the commitment remains to uphold the same standards of

service and accessibility that families expect from the existing Helix network.

The conversion of Park Ridge and Baker High under the Helix model represents a strategic opportunity to expand high-quality educational access to more students, particularly in underserved communities. By converting existing district schools into Type 3 charter schools, Helix can immediately apply its proven academic model, leadership capacity, and instructional systems to support better student outcomes without requiring significant facility investment. The addition of these schools will also enhance the network's operational scale, creating efficiencies in shared services such as professional development, data analysis, student support, and curriculum implementation.

### **Organizational Plan and Capacity**

#### *School Leadership Team Capacity and Staffing*

Helix's current executive leadership is well-qualified to support the expansion of its network to operate two new schools in St. Landry Parish. The table below shows the most relevant personnel associated with this expansion.

| <b>Leader</b>            | <b>Current Role</b>                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Preston J. Castille, Jr. | President of Helix Community Schools |
| Charita Sellers          | Regional Chief Academic Officer      |
| Alisha Welsh             | Director of Achievement              |
| Sandra Douglas           | Academic Achievement Advisor         |

**Faculty Recruitment:** Helix intends to prioritize recruitment from the existing talent pool within the Baker School System. Many current faculty and staff at Park Ridge and Baker High bring valuable experience, deep community roots, and relationships with students and families—making them ideal candidates to lead this expansion under the Helix model. In addition to local recruitment, Helix will continue its broader outreach to teacher preparation programs across Louisiana. Targeted institutions include the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana State University, Southern University, and the Louisiana Resource Center for Educators. These partnerships have previously yielded high-quality educators who are mission-aligned and eager to work in high-impact settings. All candidates—whether internal or external—will undergo a rigorous selection process that includes an initial screening, structured interview, sample lesson or teaching demonstration, and reflective debrief.

#### *Charter Board Governance and Roles and Responsibilities*

The board of directors, HCS Baton Rouge, for the proposed schools will be the same board of Helix Aviation Academy. HCS Baton Rouge will contract with Helix Community Schools, a charter school management company, which is governed by a separate board of directors.

After a review of the logistics and obligations associated with this expansion, Helix Community

Schools, with the oversight and approval of the board, will supervise qualified school principals for the two new schools. The principals will report to Charita Sellers, Helix's Regional Chief Academic Officer ("CAO"). As CAO, Mrs. Sellers is responsible for all academic and instructional aspects of all Baton Rouge area schools. The executive leadership of Helix Community Schools will handle coordination across the schools as it relates to business, public relations, institutional partnerships, and all matters of operation. It will be important for each of the new schools to be self-sustaining. Details on the financial stability and assurance that adequate monetary resources will be available to successfully execute this expansion can be found in the accompanying finances template.

Because of the limited economies of scale in the first few years of this expansion, a critical component of the scale strategy will be attracting funds to support these growth efforts. In line with this need, Helix will identify and secure sustainable sources of funding, including but not limited to non-profit grant funds to support capacity building. This support will allow Helix Community Schools to expand confident that the leadership team is well-prepared and that the network will not need to pull money from instructional support to make the necessary long-term investments that come with starting a new school.

#### *Charter Board Governance*

The Board of Directors for Helix Community Schools is ultimately responsible for the success of the schools under our governance. Because of the gravity and complexity of this responsibility, the Board has created clear systems to regularly assess the operations, finances, and academic achievement of the schools governed, as well as the performance of the network's Executive Leadership. The Board also recognizes that, in order to be effective in this oversight, critical skill sets and perspectives must be represented on the Board. Specifically, it has been a priority to ensure that members can bring insights related to the following areas: academics, finances, legal issues, management/operations, and community relations. The table below identifies the current members of the board, their professional affiliations and skill sets. (One-page resumes for each board member can be found in Appendix B).

| <b>HCS Baton Rouge Board Member &amp; Professional Affiliation</b> | <b>Relevant Skill Sets and Responsibilities</b>   |
|--|---|
| Arthur R. Cooper, JD, Chairman                                     | <p>Relevant skill sets: Founding board member with institutional memory. Significant experience in education and oversight of educational organizations. Former managing partner of law firm and investment firm. CEO of prominent research foundation.</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Academics, Management and Operations</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Timothy S. Burbach,<br>Louisiana Aviation Leader,<br>Senior Project Manager   | <p>Relevant skill sets: Civil engineer with a geotechnical background and experience in infrastructure design.</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Financial Management, Civil Engineering, and Infrastructure</p>  |
| Attorney Veronica Howard<br>Sizer, Secretary,<br>Attorney at Law<br>Former Education Policy<br>Advisor to Governor Kathleen<br>Blanco   | <p>Relevant skill sets: Former education policy advisor to Governor Kathleen Blanco. Strong legal skills with nearly 25 years of experience.</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Legal, specifically with regard to laws governing charter schools. Instrumental in the reformation of the New Orleans K-12 system following Hurricane Katrina.</p> |
| Dr. Luria Young<br>Retired, Southern University<br>and A&M College, Interim<br>Executive Vice President for<br>Academic Affairs, Interim Dean<br>of College of Education, &<br>Superintendent of Southern Lab | <p>Relevant skill sets: Significant leadership experience in the field of education both at the K-12 and higher education. Former college professor, researcher and administrator.</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Academics, Academic Leadership, and School Governance</p>  |
| Kenneth Fabre<br>Attorney at Law, City of Baker,<br>Prosecutor, Assistant District<br>Attorney  | <p>Relevant skill sets: Strong legal skills with over 25 years of experience</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Legal, Management and Operations</p>   |

| <b>Helix Community<br/>Schools Board Member &amp;<br/>Professional Affiliation</b>   | <b>Relevant Skill Sets and Responsibilities</b>  |
|--|--|
| <p>Preston J. Castille, Jr.,<br/>President</p> <p>Retired Partner &amp; Executive<br/>Committee Member, Taylor<br/>Porter Law Firm, Adjunct<br/>Professor, SU Law Center,<br/>Former Baton Rouge Bar<br/>President</p> | <p>Relevant Skill Sets: More than 20 years of legal experience; former Adjunct Law Professor at LSU (8 years), Adjunct Law Professor at SULC (19 years), former Judge Pro Tempore (appointed by LA Supreme Court); Retired Partner and Executive Committee Member at large downtown law firm; lead SULC downtown campus partnership with Helix Mentorship.</p> <p>Expertise &amp; Responsibilities: Strong legal and judicial skills; 18 years of law school teaching experience; Law firm management experience; Significant community and civic involvement.</p> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Todd Manuel, Vice Chairman<br><br>Director of Organizational Health & Diversity, Entergy Corporation             | Relevant Skill Sets: Nearly 20 years of legal experience; executive at Fortune 100 corporation.<br><br>Expertise & Responsibilities: Strong legal skills; financial management; corporate management |
| Camille Manning-Broome,<br><br>Secretary/Treasurer<br><br>President & CEO, Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) | Relevant Skill Sets: Experience in business development, management, and community planning.<br><br>Expertise & Responsibilities: Financial Management, Balanced budget; Community Engagement        |

The following section details how the varied areas of expertise align with a distinct division of responsibilities amongst the board members related to governance.

#### *Monitoring School Performance*

The governance systems created by the board are informed by the criterion of high-quality charter schools described in the Charter School Performance Compact, the metrics used by Louisiana to determine School Performance Score, and the unique mission of Helix to provide students access to opportunities in STEAM, agriculture, healthcare, AI, and energy related fields. Within this context, all metrics are in service of three foundational goals: 1) all students will be on track to graduate with the skill sets necessary to excel in both college and career pathways; 2) Helix maintains a strong organizational culture with a student body that is reflective of the community it serves and in line with Helix's larger mission of serving economically disadvantaged students; 3) the operations and finances of the organization are efficient, and sustainable.

To provide clarity to these longer-term goals, the Board will also adopt the mid-term rallying goal of all Helix schools receiving a 'B' letter grade by their third year of operation. The tables below identify the various metrics that will be used to track progress towards these goals, describe the rationale for each, specify the reporting frequency, and name the board members who will be most directly responsible for analyzing the data under each category to inform future decisions.

| <b>Metric</b>   | <b>Description/Rationale</b>   | <b>Frequency of Analysis</b> |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Academics</b><br>(Board Members Primarily Responsible for Oversight: Arthur R. Cooper, Board Chair; Dr. Luria Young, Academics Committee Chair, and Veronica Howard) |  |                              |
| Overall Academic Performance relative to school performance goals   | Assessed through interim and end-of-year standardized assessments. This is the clearest way to gauge the school's current standing relative to established performance goals.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation. | Quarterly*                   |

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|---|--|-----------|
| Student progress on interim assessments relative to school performance goals                        | Assessed through LEAP 360 and other interim assessments. The board will track student progress relative to school wide benchmark goals.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.                                 | Quarterly |
| Rate of progress for students behind grade level relative to school performance goals               | Assessed through LEAP 360 interim and other benchmark assessments. The board will isolate progress data for students who scored more than one grade level behind on their diagnostic assessment to ensure that interventions are successful. | Quarterly |
| Rate of progress for students with disabilities relative to school and individual performance goals | Assessed through LEAP 360 and other interim assessments. The board will isolate progress data for students with disabilities to ensure that interventions and academic supports are successful.  | Quarterly |
| Rate of progress for English Learners relative to school and individual performance goals           | Assessed through LEAP 360 and other interim assessments. The board will isolate progress data for students who were screened as English Learners to ensure that interventions are successful.  | Quarterly |
| % of students proficient in Math and ELA  | Assessed through end-of-year standardized tests.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation   | Annually  |

|                 |   |   |           |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------|
| Mission-Centric | Frequency of engagement with key industry sector partners | Metrics in this section are related to the mission centric goals of Helix Community Schools. In addition to a deep commitment to academic excellence in core courses, Helix Community Schools is also defined by its commitment to provide students exposure to high-demand industries and ensure that students have the opportunity to obtain marketable skills related to those industries. Since this commitment is central to the mission of Helix Community Schools, it is important to specify metrics to ensure that this commitment is a lived reality for our students. The four metrics in this section have been established to monitor both students' exposure to professionals in the fields our schools focus on, and | Quarterly |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------|

|   |   |   |          |
|---|---|---|----------|
| t<br>r<br>i<br>c<br>G<br>o<br>a<br>l<br>s | % of students participating in and completing projects related to STEAM | students' participation in project-based learning experiences relative to those fields. The measurement to be used for these metrics will be class field trips, visits from relevant professionals, and students' letter grades in elective classes where they are able to engage in relevant projects. |          |
| H<br>i<br>g<br>h                          | % Graduation Rate   | High school graduation is the single most predictive pathway to success for our students.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.  | Annually |
| S<br>c<br>h<br>o<br>o<br>l                | Strength of Diploma   | Students deserve access to rigorous coursework.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.  | Annually |
| O<br>n<br>l<br>y                          | ACT Scores  | Success on the ACT is a powerful tool to create access to world- class post-secondary opportunities.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.   | Annually |
|   | WorkKeys Assessment scores  | For students who prefer to enter directly into a career, WorkKeys is a gateway to opportunity.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.   | Annually |
|   | EOC scores and passing rate   | Success on EOC tests is critical to progress towards graduation and ensure students have the core knowledge necessary to be successful.<br><br>This is a critical component of the school's SPS calculation.  | Annually |
|   | Progress towards diploma  | It is important to have an accurate idea of the percentage of students who are not on track to graduate in a four-year timeframe in order to provide appropriate interventions and opportunities.   | Annually |

|  |                              |  |          |
|--|------------------------------|--|----------|
|  | Post-Secondary Matriculation | Assessed through family surveys in the Fall semester following graduation. Many low-income students who are accepted into college do not end up matriculating in the Fall semester. In order to properly support Helix graduates during this transition, we need an accurate count of the percentage of students who actually matriculate. | Annually |
|--|------------------------------|--|----------|



|   |  |   |                      |
|---|--|---|----------------------|
|   | Post-Secondary Persistence   | Assessed through annual family surveys. Helix Community Schools is committed to the long-term success of our students. Unfortunately, many low-income, and first-generation college students do not persist in college. For this reason, we plan to track postsecondary persistence and develop strategies to support our alumni. | Annually             |
| <b>Management &amp; Operations</b><br>(Board Members Primarily Responsible for Oversight: Arthur R. Cooper, Board Chair; and Timothy Burbach) |  |   |                      |
| Total enrollment numbers  | Tracking enrollment is critical to fulfilling our mission of serving students, as well as relevant to financial sustainability.  |   | Quarterly            |
| Enrollment reflective of local population in terms of race, gender, socio-economic status, and disabilities                                   | Helix Community Schools is committed to equity as a foundational pillar and for this reason wants to ensure that the student body reflects the demographics of the surrounding community so that steps for inclusive action can be taken if necessary. |   | Quarterly            |
| Student attendance  | Student attendance is a key indicator for the strength of a school culture and early indicator for student dropouts.   |   | Monthly              |
| Suspension and expulsion rates  | Monitoring here is critical to ensuring that discipline policies do not have an undue impact on students' opportunities for learning,  |   | Monthly              |
| Parent Satisfaction: Survey   | To gauge parent satisfaction and be responsive to parent feedback, we must seek out parent feedback on a regular basis   |   | End of each semester |
| Parent Satisfaction: Reenrollment   | The most authentic measure of family satisfaction with a school is whether families decide to return to that school the following year.  |   | Annually             |
| Teacher Retention   | Creating a staff culture that supports teachers.   |   | Annually             |
| <b>Financial Management</b><br>(Board Members Primarily Responsible for Oversight: Arthur Cooper, Board Chair, and Timothy Burbach)           |  |   |                      |
| Fund balance  | An accurate accounting of the fund budget is central to fiscal responsibility.   |   | Monthly              |
| Balanced budget   | In order for the organization to be sustainable, it will be critical to operate according to a balanced budget.  |   | Monthly              |

|   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| Audit to ensure compliance with accounting standards  | An external audit of finances is essential to the transparency and viability of the organization's health. | Annually |
| *Note: 'Quarterly' assessments refer to the school calendar and signify data that will be analyzed twice per academic semester. |  |          |

The academic metrics described above will be tracked relative to the goal that all Helix schools be on track to receive a 'B' letter grade for their third year of operation.

The Board of Directors meets regularly, and legal and financial representation is present at each meeting. Appropriate updates and decisions are made at regularly scheduled board meetings, but over the course of the year, there are three meetings that hold strategic importance for the governance of Helix: school- year launch, end of calendar year, and a two-day retreat at the end of each school year.

### *Evaluating the President/CEO*

Under Helix Community Schools, the President receives an annual performance evaluation. It is the President's responsibility to then manage the CAO and school leaders to advance the mission of Helix. The core of this evaluation are the school performance metrics as described above. As mentioned above, the performance metrics will be benchmarked against the progress necessary for each school to receive a 'B' rating for its third year of operation. The above table clearly identifies how data on each metric will be collected and the rationale for each metric as a critical predictor of success in achieving our mission. Together with the clarity of the SPS goals that progress is measured against, this clearly establishes that our described set of metrics are both necessary and sufficient for ensuring the successful completion of each school's goals. These are the outcomes-based standards for which the President will be held accountable.

In addition to these school-based metrics, the board also conducts an evaluation related to the individual management practices of the President. In addition to organizational performance, this evaluation also includes criteria for evaluating community leadership, human resource management, financial stability, and board leadership. For criteria associated with each category, the President receives scores on a 4-point scale from 'Outstanding' to 'Improvement Needed'. This evaluation is conducted by the board officers at the annual retreat and then submitted for approval by the full board. Following this evaluation, the President develops strategies to address areas rated 'Average' or 'Needs Improvement'.

Progress towards improvement in these areas is assessed by the Board officers at the end of the first academic semester. If schools are not making adequate progress relative to established goals in the network-wide metrics, and/or members of the leadership team are not responsive to deficiencies in their management practices, then an intervention process is triggered. This intervention has four distinct phases, 1) an in-depth conversation between the President and board officers to identify root causes and potential supports/strategies to address the deficiencies. This may include the contracting of an executive coach, the creation of a detailed project plan, or some other strategy, 2) the creation of a performance plan with clear benchmarks for demonstrable improvement in the identified areas, 3) monitoring of progress of this plan in four 3-month intervals, 4) if adequate progress has been made at the end of 12 months, then the performance plan is dropped. If, at the end of this process, the President has not made adequate progress, then the termination process will be initiated.

### *Identifying Conflicts of Interest*

The Helix Community Schools has a conflict-of-interest policy. The full policy is available upon request. According to the policy, Board members have a duty to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest where a conflict of interest is defined as '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.' The procedure for addressing a conflict of interest is as follows:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

### *Board Development*

Once the roles and perspectives for new board members are prioritized, potential members are identified by the nominating committee. Potential candidates are then screened to ensure that they are aligned with the mission and values of Helix Community Schools, and to ensure they have the capacity to dedicate the necessary time to their board service. Approved candidates are then recommended by the nominating committee for a vote by the whole board. This process will conclude before the end of the school year so that new board members are able to participate in the annual board retreat which follows the end of each school year.

### **Executive Leadership Team Capacity**

#### *The Executive Leadership Team*

The strength of Helix Community Schools' leadership team is a foundational component of the network's success. The leadership team that will lead the expansion efforts consists primarily of the following key individuals (one-page resumes can be found in Appendix A).

Preston J. Castille, Jr. - President, Helix Community Schools

Preston Castille became President of Helix Community Schools in 2019. He has been an adjunct law professor for more than two decades. He began his teaching career in 2001 at LSU Law School and taught there for eight years. In 2003, he began teaching at Southern University Law Center and teaches Education Law & Policy, Evidence, Louisiana Civil Procedure I & II, and Trial Advocacy. After 25 years with the law firm, Preston retired from the partnership and Executive

Committee of the Taylor, Porter, Brooks & Phillips in January of 2020, where he and eight other partners had led the management team of the firm. Preston practiced law primarily in commercial transaction and complex litigation and focused substantially on matters in the Education and Energy sectors in the U.S. and abroad. As a retired partner, he continues to serve as Of Counsel with the firm. In 2009, Preston was also appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as an ad hoc judge on the Baton Rouge City Court, where gained a unique perspective not only on our legal system but also on our educational system as he observed too many disadvantaged children become lost to the criminal justice system.

In 2019, Preston was elected to the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), where he serves as the District 8 member. District 8 is a 14-parish district which includes both East Baton Rouge Parish as well as St. Landry Parish. His district includes some of the poorest parts of the state and some of the most-disadvantaged children. Along with his 10 other BESE colleagues, he represents more than 800,000 students across the state of Louisiana.

Preston is a 1985 graduate of Plaisance High School, where he graduated valedictorian, was captain of the school's marching and concert band, and was the school's first state science fair winner. In high school, he spent two summers in the Upward Bound Program at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He then attended Southern University on a full academic scholarship. At Southern, he became student body president and was selected by other undergraduate, law school and medical school student body presidents across the state to serve as the student member of the Louisiana Board of Regents. Preston always had a love for science and attended the Meharry Medical College Biomedical Sciences Program in Memphis, TN during the summer of 1986.

After graduating from Southern University, he worked as an economist for the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, DC. He then returned to Louisiana in 1991 where attended Tulane Law School, served on the school's prestigious Moot Court Board, and graduated *Order of the Barristers*, one of the highest honors bestowed upon a student for oral advocacy.

Preston is active in various education-related organizations. He served on Governor John Bel Edwards' Education Transition Committee in 2015 and EBR Mayor President Sharon Weston Broome's Education Transition Team in 2016. He is the Immediate Past National President of the Southern University Alumni Federation and is a current member of the Tulane Law School Dean Advisory Board. He is a past board chairman of the Board of Directors of New Schools for Baton Rouge. He is also a former member of the Board of Directors of Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS). He is a past president of the Baton Rouge Bar Association, the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, and member of the Louisiana State Bar Association Board of Governors and House of Delegates.

Charita Sellers – Regional Chief Academic Officer, Helix Community Schools

Charita Sellers is a dedicated educational leader with a proven track record of driving academic excellence and career readiness in urban schools. As the Founding Principal and newly appointed Regional Chief Academic Officer of Helix Aviation Academy, she has been instrumental in expanding aviation-focused education and improving student outcomes. Under her leadership, Helix Aviation Academy has grown from 40 students to over 380, expanded its aviation curriculum, and hired a full-time flight instructor, ensuring students gain real-world aviation experience.

With a Master's in Educational Leadership and over 15 years of experience in instructional leadership, curriculum development, and workforce readiness, Charita has successfully implemented STEM and career-focused initiatives. She has led professional development, data-

driven instruction, and career training programs, preparing students for postsecondary success.

Her expertise in curriculum alignment, assessment coordination, and industry partnerships makes her uniquely qualified to lead this expansion project, ensuring students in Baker have access to high-quality education and career pathways.

**Alisa Welsh – Director of Achievement, Helix Community Schools**

Alisa Welsh - Alisa Welsh has been the driving force behind Madison Preparatory Academy's success for the past 16 years. As Principal, she has cultivated a thriving learning environment that consistently achieves strong results. Under her leadership, Madison Preparatory Academy has maintained a solid 'B' rating for the last six years, demonstrating a commitment to consistent performance and student achievement. A testament to her vision and collaborative leadership, Alisa and her dedicated staff were honored with a National Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education in 2016, recognizing Madison Preparatory Academy's exemplary growth and unwavering dedication to student progress. Alisa's passion for education and her ability to foster a positive and supportive school culture has been instrumental in creating an environment where students can thrive and reach their full potential. Alisa Welsh's educational background includes graduation from Gulfport High School in Gulfport, Mississippi, followed by bachelor's and master's degrees from Southern University and A&M College. She also holds certification in Educational Leadership from Advanced Innovations in Education. A devoted member of her community, Alisa is married to Joseph Welsh and is a proud mother of two and grandmother of six.

**Sandra Douglas – Academic Achievement Advisor**

Sandra Adams Douglas is a seasoned educational leader and nationally recognized turnaround specialist with over four decades of experience improving academic outcomes across Louisiana. As the Founder and Chief Education Officer of SOAR Education Consulting, LLC, Sandra partners with districts and schools to elevate student achievement through high-impact tutoring, leadership development, and strategic academic support. A certified vendor for the Louisiana Department of Education, she has led efforts that have already served over 200 scholars through the Steve Carter Program and High Dosage Tutoring initiative.

Previously, Sandra served as Chief Academic Officer and Lead Principal for GEO Academies of Greater Baton Rouge, where she transformed underperforming schools into high-performing campuses—raising school performance scores by as much as 10 points and growing enrollment to nearly 2,000 scholars. She also served as Executive Director of School Leadership for East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, where she launched the district's first Instructional Leaders Program to train aspiring principals.

Sandra holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and a Master of Education in Administration and Supervision from Southern University, along with a prestigious School Turnaround Specialist Endorsement from the University of Virginia. She has been repeatedly honored for her excellence in teaching and leadership, including recognition as a multi-year "Teacher of the Year" and recipient of the EXXON Teacher Award in Mathematics and Science. A lifelong educator and mentor, Sandra remains committed to empowering school leaders and educators to drive sustainable academic gains for all students.

## **Financial Plan and Capacity**

### *The Chief Financial Officer*

As the financial manager for the Helix network, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Denise Armstrong, plays a central role in aligning financial strategy with organizational priorities. The CFO leads the development of annual budgets in collaboration with school and network leadership, ensuring that each budget reflects strategic goals, anticipated growth, and evolving student needs. The CFO also monitors cash flow, manages vendor relationships, and oversees audits and compliance reporting. By providing timely financial analysis and forecasting, the CFO equips leadership and the board with the data needed to make informed decisions, mitigate financial risk, and plan for sustainable expansion. Through this proactive financial management, the CFO ensures the fiscal health of the organization and supports its mission to deliver high-quality, equitable education.

### *Approach to Budgeting and Budget Shortfall*

Annual operating budgets and any budget updates will be prepared by the Financial Manager working closely with the President, School Leadership, and Operations Manager as appropriate. The budget will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and submitted for approval by the full Board. Any updated operating budgets with greater than a 5% variance in either revenue or expenses are required to have full Board approval (after review by the Finance Committee).

The annual operating budget will be prepared using conservative assumptions regarding student *enrollment*, MFP funding, federal funding, and expenses. When budgeting expenses, the school will err on the side of budgeting higher usage and higher per unit costs. In addition, the expense budget will contain a reasonable contingency for unforeseen expenses.

If a budget shortfall arose due to lower enrollment, the school should be able to reduce staff accordingly and/or combine positions where possible. The school will also identify certain non-instructional costs including facility, busing, and school administration costs that will have a minimum effect on the quality of education if reduced or eliminated. Negotiating reduced costs with some vendors is also possible for one-time events. During the budget process, the school will identify “discretionary” expenses that could be eliminated if the school was required to reduce overall costs.

### *Accounting, Control System, and Culture of Financial Stewardship*

Helix’s CFO leads the finance team with a focus on accuracy, transparency, and long-term sustainability. Under the CFO’s leadership, the network maintains a robust accounting and internal control system aligned with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and state and federal compliance requirements. The CFO oversees all financial reporting, budgeting, and grant compliance, ensuring that every dollar is tracked, allocated, and spent responsibly. Just as importantly, the CFO fosters a network-wide culture of financial stewardship—promoting fiscal discipline among school leaders, ensuring that resources are aligned to student outcomes, and equipping non-finance staff with tools to manage their budgets effectively and responsibly.

The CFO and finance team reports directly to the President and Board of Helix Community Schools as well as the school board’s finance committee to ensure that all finances are accurately accounted for in the schools’ financial statements.

A Finance Committee appointed by the Board ensures fiscal accountability and transparency by

performing the following:

- Review and approve annual budget, including revisions if necessary
- In conjunction with the President reviewing the school's financial statements on a monthly basis, including the balance sheet and revenue & expense statement compared to budget;
- Ensuring proper financial and accounting practices in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations by reviewing & approving initial policies and procedures as well as any revisions;
- Conduct thorough investigations of any financial discrepancies or irregularities; report any issues to the appropriate agencies;
- Choose a qualified CPA firm to handle the annual audits and tax returns

The CFO uses accounting and financial reporting software to allow for proper financial reporting. The schools follow a set of financial policies and procedures that cover the following areas: Segregation of duties, Safeguarding of assets, Budgeting, Cash receipts, Purchasing including public bid law, Cash disbursements including authorized, Accounts payable, Contracts, Credit cards, Travel, Payroll, Federal & state grants management, Financial reporting, and Fixed assets.

The Board engages a qualified CPA firm to audit the schools' financial records, including payroll and grants. All transactions and documents will adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP). Furthermore, the CPA ensures that restricted grant funds have been properly appropriated according to the terms associated with the awarding of those grants. The CPA firm also makes recommendations on general financial accounting and financial analysis practices.

The CPA firm completes the following annually:

- Annual financial audit which includes review of all financial statements and internal control processes;
- A-133 Single audit (if necessary) if receiving federal funds in excess of the current threshold;
- Agreed upon procedures reports as required by BESE
- Statewide Agreed-Upon Procedures required by LLA
- IRS Form 990 tax return

# **Appendix A**



**Preston J. Castille, Jr.**  
339 Florida Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801  
[Preston.Castille@HelixCommunitySchools.org](mailto:Preston.Castille@HelixCommunitySchools.org)  
Telephone: 225.317.3363

## **RESUMÉ**

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### **Education Experience**

#### **HELIX COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

**President**, 2019 - Present.

[www.HelixCommunitySchools.org](http://www.HelixCommunitySchools.org)

#### **LSU LAW SCHOOL**

**Adjunct Law Professor**, 2001 – 2009.

[www.law.lsu.edu](http://www.law.lsu.edu)

Course: Pretrial Litigation Practice.

#### **SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER**

**Adjunct Law Professor**, 2003 – Present.

[www.sulc.edu](http://www.sulc.edu)

Courses: Education Law & Policy, Louisiana Civil Procedure I & II, Evidence, Trial Advocacy and Pretrial Litigation Practice.

### **Legal Experience**

**TAYLOR, PORTER, BROOKS & PHILLIPS, LLP**, Attorneys at Law

**Of Counsel**, 2020 – Present.

**Partner | Executive Committee**, 1994 – 2020.

[www.TaylorPorter.com](http://www.TaylorPorter.com)

**MSI GLOBAL ALLIANCE**, London, England

**Management Board | North America Area Representative**, 2011 – 2022.

[www.msiglobal.org](http://www.msiglobal.org)

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM FOUNDATION**

**Trustee & General Counsel**, 2000 – Present.

[www.foundation.sus.edu](http://www.foundation.sus.edu)

### **Judicial Experience**

**BATON ROUGE CITY COURT**

**Judge *Pro Tempore***, January - May, 2009.

Appointed by Louisiana Supreme Court

[www.brgov.com](http://www.brgov.com)

**BATON ROUGE CITY COURT**

**Judge *Ad Hoc***, Periodically, 2003 – 2015.

**Appointed by Louisiana Supreme Court**

**Public Service**

**Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)**, District 8 Member.

Chair of School Innovation and Turnaround Committee, 2020 - 2022.

**Louisiana Board of Regents for Higher Education**, Student Member, 1987 - 1988.

**Other Professional Experience**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**, Washington, D.C.

**Economist**, 1990 – 1991.

[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

**Bar Admissions**

United States Supreme Court; U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeal; United States District Court for the State of Louisiana for the Middle, Western and Eastern Districts; All Louisiana State Courts.

**Education**

**TULANE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, New Orleans, Louisiana

**Juris Doctor**, 1994.

[www.law.tulane.edu](http://www.law.tulane.edu)

*Significant Honors and Accomplishments:*

- *The Order of Barristers*
- Tulane Moot Court Board, Senior Appellate Chairman
- Tulane Appellate Advocacy Competition, Winner
- National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition, Quarterfinalist, (Pace University, NY)

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY and A&M College**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

**Bachelor of Science in Economics**, 1990.

[www.subr.edu](http://www.subr.edu)

*Significant Honors and Accomplishments:*

- Student Government Association (SGA), President, 1987-88
- National Honors Society, National Vice President (Highest Student Office), 1987-88
- Pre-Med Scholarship, Academic Scholarship, Presidential Scholarship & Dean's List
- *Wall Street Journal* Award in Economics

**MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE**, Nashville, Tennessee

**Biomedical Sciences Program**, Summer 1986.

[www.mmc.edu](http://www.mmc.edu)

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA (Now ULL)**, Lafayette, Louisiana  
Upward Board, Summer 1985.  
[www.louisiana.edu](http://www.louisiana.edu)

**PLAISANCE HIGH SCHOOL**, Plaisance, Louisiana  
Valedictorian, 1985.

### **Professional Affiliations**

**Baton Rouge Bar Association & Baton Rouge Bar Foundation**  
**President**, 2011, **Board of Directors**, 2003 - 2012.  
[www.brba.org](http://www.brba.org)

**Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Baton Rouge Chapter**  
**President**, **Vice President**, **Treasurer**, 2002-1996.  
[www.louismartinetbr.com](http://www.louismartinetbr.com)

**Louis A. Martinet Foundation**  
**Founder and Chairman of the Board**, 1999 – 2001.  
[www.louismartinetbr.com](http://www.louismartinetbr.com)

**Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA)**  
**Board of Governors**, 2003 - 2004.  
[www.lsba.org](http://www.lsba.org)

**Louisiana State Bar Association**  
**House of Delegates**, 2011 - 2013.

**Louisiana State Law Institute**  
**Council Member**, 2015 - 2018.  
[www.lsl.org](http://www.lsl.org)

**Louisiana Supreme Court Rules Committee**  
**Member**, 2012 - Present.  
[www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org)

**American Bar Association (ABA)**  
**Delegate**, ABA House of Delegates, 2015 - 2018.  
[www.AmericanBar.org](http://www.AmericanBar.org)

**Defense Research Institute (DRI)**  
**Chairman of Diversity Committee Online Community**, 2014 - 2016.  
[www.dri.org](http://www.dri.org)

**National Conference of Bar Presidents**  
**Member**, 2011 - 2014.  
[www.ncbp.org](http://www.ncbp.org)

**Other Bar Associations:** Arizona Federal Bar (Previously admitted *Pro Hac Vice*); National Bar Association; Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel; Defense Research Institute; Dean McMahon American Inns of Court.

### **Civic Affiliations**

**Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX)**

Member, 2014 - Present; Chairman, 2020 - Present.

**Baton Rouge Area Foundation (BRAf)**

Member, Board of Directors, 2019 - Present.

**Tulane Law School Dean's Advisory Board**

Member, 2019 - Present.

**New Schools for Baton Rouge**

Member, 2013 - 2019; Chairman, 2017 - 2019; Chairman Emeritus, 2019 - Present.

**Governor John Bel Edwards Higher Education Transition Team**

Appointed December 2015.

[www.onwardlouisiana.com](http://www.onwardlouisiana.com)

**Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome Education Transition Team**

Appointed December 2016.

**Southern University Alumni Federation**

**National President**, 2014 - 2018.

[www.sualumni.org](http://www.sualumni.org)

**Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce**

Business Development Advisory Committee, 2013 - 2015.

Leadership Baton Rouge Program (Class of 1997).

**Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL)**

Louisiana Leadership Class, 2012.

**Baker Planning and Zoning Commission**

Board of Directors, 2001 - 2002.

**Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)**

Board of Directors, 1996 - 2001.

**St. Paul Adult Education Center**

Board of Directors, 1996 - 2000.

**City Club of Baton Rouge**

Member, 2013 - Present

Board of Governors, 2021 - Present.

## Charita Sellers

225-364-6096- charitab25@gmail.com

Experienced Leader with a proven track record of high performance in urban schools.

## EDUCATION

### **M.Ed. in Educational Leadership** (Passed School Leadership Licensure Assessment)

University of Phoenix - online

February 2016

**(Administrative Internship- 240 hours-Bastrop High School: 2014-2015)**

### **Educator Preparation Institute**

Valencia College- Orlando, FL

December 2009

### **B.A. of Arts in English**

University of Louisiana at Monroe- Monroe, LA

May 2007

Member of Sigma Tau Delta (English Honor Society)

## EXPERIENCE

### **Assistant Principal of Instruction (6-8)**

*Crescent City Schools*

*New Orleans, LA*

*July 2017- presently*

- Recruit and hire staff that are passionate about the school's mission.
- Increase the effectiveness of instruction in 6th-8th grade classrooms.
- Maintaining a culture of high expectations for all students.
- Providing professional development for teachers on instructional delivery of aligned rigorous curriculum
- Leading group and individual data meetings with teachers to inform instruction
- Coach teachers on the implementation of team systems, routines, and procedures.
- Weekly walk throughs and immediate feedback on highest leverage growth items related to classroom culture and instruction.
- Support the implementation of a school wide behavior system along with collaborating with teachers to create PBIS initiatives.
- Coordinating multiple assessment programs, including STEP, Fountas and Pinnell, Achievement Network, school-specific interim and state testing.
- Coordinate intervention and support in the planning and implementation of Response to Intervention.
- Collaborating with others to further the mission of the school.
- Manage positive Adult Culture and strategically respond to all emergencies.

#### Accomplishments

2017-2018: Ranked #1 for growth among all open-enrollment k-8 schools in the city of New Orleans.

2018-2019: Ranked #2 for growth among all open enrollment k-8 schools in the city of New Orleans.

## Certifications and Trainings

- **Teacher Certifications:**  
Language Arts (FL: 6-9)  
(LA :4-8 ELA)
- **EDLeader:** Passed  
Licensure Ass (5/16)
- **KeyTrain/Workkeys  
Training: 3/2014**  
National Career  
Readiness Certification  
(NCRC: Gold Certificate)
- Work Ready  
Community Academy  
2014-2015
- **Wide World at Harvard  
Graduate School of  
Education Courses**
- Teaching for  
Understanding I  
12/07 (45hrs)
- Teaching for  
Understanding II  
12/09 (45 hrs)
- Differentiating  
Instruction  
2010 (45hrs)
- Reading across the  
Content Areas  
2011 (45hrs)
- **Beacon Educator  
Reading Endorsement**
- Foundations of  
Instruction (60hrs)
- Research Based  
Practices (60 hrs)
- Assessment  
(60 hours)
- Differentiated  
Instruction  
(60 hours)
- Demonstration of  
Accomplishment  
(60 hours)
- ESOL Endorsed (60hrs)

## **Academic Dean**

*Apex Collegiate Academy*

*Scotlandville, LA*

*2016- 2017*

- Provide professional development for teachers that supports delivery of a Common Core-aligned curriculum with high leverage ELD and engagement strategies in order to maximize student learning. This support may include, but is not limited to: Collaborating with teachers (in-teams or individually) to refine their knowledge and skills. Methods of instruction may include in-class coaching, peer observation, co-teaching, and modeling effective instruction using a gradual release structure.
- Analyzing student work and providing strategies for effective instruction
- Facilitate peer observation and coaching to improve teacher effectiveness and facilitate effective collaboration for grade level teams
- Conduct demonstration lessons
- Help teachers and staff interpret and use student data to guide instruction

## **.... ACT and Career Ready 101 Coordinator/**

### **Middle School Reading Teacher**

*Morehouse Parish*

*August 2011-July 2015*

*Bastrop, LA*

*I taught Reading from 2011-2013 to 8<sup>th</sup> graders. At the junior high, I served as the head of PTO, and planned all Literacy events. Within this time, I became involved in community initiatives, and was selected to move to the high school and launch Career Ready 101. I served as the Career Ready 101 Coordination from 2013-2015.*

- Provide professional development to teachers on data analysis, instructional adjustments, and remediation.
- Provide college bound students with a rigorous and data driven program of college readiness and standardized test preparation
- Provide work bound students with a chance to enter into the competitive workforce through Keytrain (ACT Career Ready 101) in which they will receive their National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable credential that demonstrates achievement and a certain level of workplace employability skills in Applied Math, Locating Information, and Reading for Information

- **Contributions**

Career Ready 101 Testing Coordinator, 70% plus students increased by at least 2 levels on Career Ready 101 post tests. Yearbook Sponsor: Raised \$13,000: ads and fundraisers,

## **Extra Skills**

- Curriculum Alignment/ Development 2013 ongoing, RTI 2007 ongoing, Project Based Learning 2007 ongoing, Balanced Literacy 2007 ongoing, Data Analysis 2007 ongoing

## **Middle School Reading Teacher**

# **SANDRA ADAMS DOUGLAS**

**904 Sinbad Street**

**Baker, LA 70714**

**Phone: 225-337-7636 Email: sdouglas699@gmail.com**

## **Objective:**

To partner with districts and schools to significantly increase student achievement by utilizing my experiences as a turnaround specialist to inspire, mentor, support, transform, share and model best practices for educators.

## **Education:**

2011: School Turnaround Specialist Endorsement - University of Virginia

2000: Master of Education Plus 30 Graduate Hours - Administration and Supervision - Southern University

1982: Bachelor of Arts – Elementary Education (Grades 1-8) - Southern University

## **Experience:**

*Owner/Chief Education Officer*

*SOAR Education Consulting, LLC*

*2/2024 - Present*

- LDOE vendor for the **Steve Carter Program** and **High Dosage Tutoring**
- To date SOAR has tutored over 200 scholars to improve literacy skills
- Assist school leaders with utilizing research-based strategies to improve academic achievement for all students.
- Co-facilitator of the Aspiring Principal Fellowship Cohort 2024-25

*Chief Academic Officer*

*Lead Principal*

*GEO Academies of Greater BR*

*3/2015 – 1/2024*

*Founding Principal*

- Under my leadership, all GEO schools earned the letter grade of a **“B”**
- All schools. grew at least 6.0 pts on their SPS on LEAP 2025 in the spring of 2023; and enrollment increased to approximately 2,000 scholars
- GEO Prep Mid-City moved from an F school to a C school in three academic years
- Implemented tutoring and interventions during the school day to increase student achievement
- Promoted to Lead Principal for both GEO Prep Academy and GEO Prep Mid-City in 2017. GEO Prep grew 5.6 pts and GEO Prep Mid-City grew 10 pts.
- Opened GEO Prep Academy (TAP school) as its founding principal in 2015 with 161 scholars

*Executive Director of*

*EBR Parish Schools*

*2011 - 2015*

*School Leadership Curriculum*

*and Professional Development*

- Provided professional development and supported curriculum implementation for EBR Parish Schools
- Implemented and facilitated the first “Instructional Leaders Program” for aspiring principal leaders in 2013
- Supervised four elementary schools in EBR

*Principal*

*Claiborne Elementary/EBR Parish Schools*

*2006 - 2011*

- School grew more than 16 pts. to exit *Unacceptable* school status to a *One-Star* school
- Piloted an “Extended Day Program” and an “Extended Year Program” in EBR
- Implemented TAP and hosted various TAP related activities
- Received Credential for the successful completion of Virginia School Turnaround Specialist Program

*Mathematics Classroom Teacher Crestworth Middle School*

*2000-2002; 2005- 2006*

*TAP Master Teacher*

- Received the EXXON Teacher Award in Mathematics and Science
- TAP Master Teacher
- Implemented a tutoring program during the school day for scholars needing additional support in ELA and math



*Math Facilitator*

*Middle School Supervisor*

*Test Coordinator*

*East Feliciana Parish Schools*

*1996 – 1999; 2002-2004*

- *Increased* the number of scholars passing LEAP at Clinton and Jackson Middle Schools
- Implemented Algebra I class at the middle school level
- Implemented an intervention program at the middle school level

*Elementary Classroom Teacher*

*EBR Parish Schools, Ascension Parish Schools*

*1983 – 1995*

*Grades 1 – 5*

*Tangipahoa Parish Schools and Acadia Parish Schools*

- Planned for instruction and managed classes effectively
- Named “Teacher of the Year” several times
- Had a high passage rate on LEAP (Between 93% - 100%)

## References

*Available upon request.*

## **Appendix B**

# ARTHUR R. COOPER

38197 Summerwood Ave  
Prairieville, Louisiana 70769  
Home : (225) 744-3937  
Office: (225) 615-8904  
Cell: (225) 241-0303

## EMPLOYMENT

|  |  |
|--|--|
| CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER<br><i>Louisiana State University System Research &amp; Technology Foundation</i> | 2005-PRESENT<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i> |
| EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LOUISIANA EMERGING TECHNOLOGY CENTER<br><i>Louisiana State University</i>            | 2004-PRESENT<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i> |
| DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS RETENTION & ASSISTANCE<br><i>Department of Economic Development</i>                 | 2001-2004<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |
| AREA ATTORNEY<br><i>Small Business Administration</i>  | 2001<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>         |
| CEO<br><i>SuperNatural Foods, LLC (and its predecessor Food Science)</i>                                 | 1999-2001<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |
| MANAGING PARTNER<br><i>Arthur R. Cooper, APLC</i>  | 1998-2001<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |
| MANAGING PARTNER<br><i>Bell, Cooper &amp; Hyman (and predecessor firms)</i>                              | 1983-1998<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |
| MANAGING PARTNER<br><i>Bell, Cooper &amp; Hyman Investment Company (and predecessor firms)</i>           | 1983-1998<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |
| DESIGN ENGINEER<br><i>Barbay Engineers</i>   | 1980-1982<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>    |

## EDUCATION

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ACCOUNTING COURSES<br><i>Louisiana State University</i>             | 2001-<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>       |
| JURIS DOCTOR<br><i>Louisiana State University</i>                   | 1980 - 1983<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i> |
| B.S. IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING<br><i>Louisiana State University</i> | 1976-1980<br><i>Baton Rouge, LA</i>   |

## ASSOCIATIONS AND BOARDS

Member of the Louisiana State Bar Association  
Member of the Louisiana Industrial Development Executives Association (Former President)  
Member of the International Economic Development Council  
Member of the National Business Incubator Association  
Board member of NO Bioinnovation Center  
Board member of the Louisiana Small Business Development Centers  
Board member of the Louisiana Business Incubator Association (Former President)  
Board member of the Ascension Industrial Development Board  
Board member of the Helix Network of Educational Choices

# **VERONICA HOWARD SIZER**

4408 Azie Avenue

Baker, Louisiana 70714

Mobile: 225.235.5410 | [veronicalhoward@judahliongroup.com](mailto:veronicalhoward@judahliongroup.com)

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **Law Office of Veronica L. Howard, LLC**

*Attorney*, April 2004 to present

### **Division of Administration, Office of General Counsel**

*Attorney 4*, December 2014 to present

### **Division of Administration, Office of the Commissioner**

*Research Analyst, Special Projects Team Lead*, May 2013 to December 2014

### **Recovery School District**

*Executive Director of External Affairs*, May 2012 to November 2012

### **Louisiana Department of Justice**

Honorable Charles C. Foti, Jr., Attorney General

Honorable Richard Ieyoub, Attorney General

*Section Chief, Education/IAT Section*, January 2002 to February 2004

### **Office of the Governor**

Honorable Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, Governor

*Education Policy Advisor*, February 2004 to January 2007

### **19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Honorable Curtis A. Calloway, Judge

*Staff Attorney/Law Clerk*, August 1994 to October 1998

## **EDUCATION**

### **Southern University Law Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana Juris**

Doctorate, May 1993

### **Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 1990

3.4 GPA (cum laude), Top Graduating Senior, Class Marshall

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- Louisiana Bar Association
- United States Supreme Court
- Federal Eastern, Western, and Middle Districts
- Federal 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals
- Baton Rouge Bar Association
- Louis A. Martinet Legal Society

**Luria Young, Ph.D.**  
**225-205-7158 (cp)**  
[LuriaYoung@gmail.com](mailto:LuriaYoung@gmail.com)

#### **ACADEMIC PREPARATION**

**Louisiana State University**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Leadership, Research and Counseling**, concentration in **Higher Education**, May 2004

**Louisiana State University**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Educational Specialist Certificate, Secondary Science Education**, May 1997

**Louisiana State University**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Master of Education, Secondary Science Education**, August 1995

**Southern University and A&M College**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Bachelor of Science, Biology**, May 1993

#### **PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS**

**The Shaw Consulting Group, LLC, Owner/Lead Consultant**, February 1, 2018-present

**Southern University and A&M College Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs** -January 1, 2018 – March 31, 2018 (Retired March 31, 2018)

**Southern University System / Southern University and A&M College, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost** May 15, 2017–December 31, 2017

**Southern University and A&M College Office of Academic Affairs Vice Provost for Academic Affairs**, March 1, 2016 – May 12, 2017

**Southern University Department of Science/Mathematics Education Doctoral Program**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Professor**, August 2015 – February 2016

**Southern University College of Education, Arts & Humanities (CoEAH)**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Interim Dean and Superintendent of the Southern University Laboratory School**  
**Professor**, December 2012 – July 2015; Rosalie Guidry Daste Endowed Professorship in Urban Education, Fall 2012 – present, NCATE Coordinator (Spring 2007 – July 2015)

**Southern University Department of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I)**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
**Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) Science Education Specialist and Associate Professor**, August 2004 – November 2012; Graduate Studies Faculty (Spring 2008 – November 2012), NCATE Coordinator (Fall 2006 – November 2012)

**Southern University Department of Science and Mathematics Education Doctoral Program**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana - **Adjunct Faculty**, August 2008 – July 2015

# KENNETH R. FABRE'

*Attorney-At-Law*

5821 Laurel Hill Lane, Saint Francisville, Louisiana 70714  
popapic@gmail.com  
(225) 916-5016

## highlights of qualifications

- More than 30 years of dedicated, diversified and patriotic experience, holding positions of increasing scope and responsibility.
- An accomplished attorney and legal counselor/advisor who possesses a wealth of legal experience having worked extensively within the public, military and private sectors.
- Highly experienced in all aspects of legal work, and is thoroughly familiar with legal standards, protocols, and effective advocacy while being firmly committed to providing the highest levels of legal advocacy, counsel and varied services.

## professional experience

### **THE FABRE LAW FIRM, LLC**, Baker, Louisiana

*Attorney at Law* (Private Practice 1990-Present)

Responsible for managing daily firm operations, client intake and assessment, case evaluation, case strategy development, conducting case research, interviewing case principals and witnesses, trial preparation, settlement negotiation, legal document preparation, and client relations.

- Firm serves a large and diverse client population.
- Provides the highest levels of legal counsel and representation.

### **CITY OF BAKER**, Baker, Louisiana

***City Attorney/Head of Legal Department (2012-Present)***

Directly responsible for managing the City of Baker's day to day legal department activities, training and supervising legal and support personnel, workflow coordination, allocating work assignments, staff evaluation, and community relations.

- Has managed a legal department and has consistently met all City and Parish wide expectations.
- Trains, mentors and supervises all levels of departmental personnel.

### **CITY OF BAKER**, Baker, Louisiana

***Prosecutor (2004-2012)***

Responsible for caseload management, case evaluation and prosecutions, case strategy development, interviewing case principals and witnesses, trial preparation, and other prosecution-related functions.

- Handled a large and diverse caseload

### **18<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT**, Port Allen, Louisiana

***Assistant District Attorney (2003-2022)***

Responsible for managing caseload, case prosecutions, legal strategy development, interviewing witnesses and other case principals, trial preparation, and other related assignments; responsible for over 31,000 DWI convictions.

- Was appointed by the Honorable Ricky Ward, District Attorney, 18<sup>th</sup> JDC and Murphy J. Foster, Governor of the State of Louisiana, followed by re-appointment by the Honorable Tony Clayton, District Attorney, 18<sup>th</sup> JDC upon his election.

### **US ARMY JAG CORPS & OFFICE OF THE US ATTORNEY (Eastern District of Virginia)**, Alexandria, Virginia

***Prosecutor/ Special Assistant United States Attorney (1990-1991)***

Responsible prosecuting civilians accused of crimes while within U.S. Army jurisdiction (concurrent jurisdiction), case strategy development, conducting witness interviews, legal documents preparation, trial preparation, and client relations.

- Prosecuted cases in the Federal Courts of the Eastern District of Virginia.

**US ARMY JAG CORPS (Headquarters, MDW)**, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. and Fort Myers, Virginia  
***Prosecutor/Assistant Staff Judge Advocate/Command Claims Judge Advocate/Legal Assistance Officer (1989-1992)***

Duties included case load management, prosecuting cases, legal strategy development, conducting witness interviews, trial preparation, and preparing all manner of legal documents. As Legal Assistance Officer, provided military personnel advice and assistance. Assisted in the areas of taxation, domestic relations, consumer credit, wills and probate, insurance, real estate transactions, contracts, and other areas.

- Prosecuted criminal cases covering a myriad of crimes.
- Admitted to the U.S. Army Court of Military Review.
- Promoted to the rank of Captain in 1989.
- Initiated and managed tax assistance program, emphasizing federal taxation and tax rules.

**US ARMY JAG CORPS (Headquarters Army Material Command)**, Alexandria, Virginia  
***Freedom of Information Act – Action Officer (1988-1989)***

Responsible for handling all FOIA requests made to Headquarters which required a Secret Security Clearance due to sensitive secret documents and information handled.

- Performed as the Initial Denial Authority on behalf of the Headquarters, AMC Commanding General.

## **education**

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
Bachelor of Arts in Education and Music, 1984.

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER**, Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
Juris Doctorate, 1987.

**U.S. ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S SCHOOL BASIC COURSE** (University of Virginia),  
Charlottesville, Virginia  
Completed 12-week intensive Military Law Training, 1988.

## **honors, awards and appointments**

- Member, National Litigation Academy Honor Corps, Alliance Defending Freedom, Scottsdale, Arizona.
- U.S. Army Letter of Appreciation, recognized for assisting numerous soldiers in need of the 437<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company.

## **professional certifications**

- Louisiana State Bar Association

## **special training**

- Advanced Trial Advocacy
- Advanced Writing
- Motivational Speaking
- Mentoring

## **additional information**

- Author, Musician, Inspirational Conference Speaker and Ordained Minister





## Final Recommendation to the City of Baker School Board 2025

| Recommendation   |
|--|
| <b>Approve the Application for Helix Community Schools</b> |

| School Information           |                                   |                                  |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| School                       | Park Ridge Academic Magnet School | Home District                    | City of Baker School System       |
| School                       | Baker High School                 | Home District                    | City of Baker School System       |
| Type                         | Type 3 Charter                    | Districts Served/Specific School | Park Ridge Academic Magnet School |
| Type                         | Type 3 Charter                    | Districts Served/Specific School | Baker High School                 |
| CMO/EMO                      | N/A                               | Year Opening                     | 2025 (both schools)               |
| Grade Configuration at Start | K-8 Park Ridge                    | Grade Configuration at Scale     | K-8 Park Ridge                    |
| Grade Configuration at Start | 9-12 Baker High                   | Grade Configuration at Scale     | 9-12 Baker High                   |
| Enrollment at Start          | Park Ridge = 94                   | Enrollment at Scale              | Park Ridge = 100+                 |
| Enrollment at Start          | Baker High = 366                  | Enrollment at Scale              | Baker High = 400+                 |

| Reasons for Recommendation  |
|---|
| <p>Helix Community Schools Baton Rouge seeks to expand on the success of its network of innovative, career-focused public schools by converting two existing public schools in the City of Baker School System into Type 3 charter schools: Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School.</p> <p>According to data from the Louisiana Department of Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park Ridge Academic Magnet School currently has 94 students. Their School Performance Score for 2023 was 69.6/C. Their School Performance Score for 2024 was 64.0/C.</li> <li>• Baker High School currently has 366 students. Their School Performance Score for 2023 was 51.3/D. Their School Performance Score for 2025 was 50.8/D.</li> </ul> |

Helix Community Schools has a model that emphasizes academic excellence, specialized competencies for high-demand jobs, social-emotional support through mentoring and a policy of equity for all students.

According to the application, Park Ridge Academic Magnet School will expand its enrollment to serve more students in kindergarten through eighth grade and will be open to all students residing within Baker. Baker High School will continue serving students in grades nine through twelve maintaining its role as the city's comprehensive public high school. Helix anticipates increased enrollment at both locations and will expand to accommodate community demand, with detailed yearly projections ensuring sustainable growth and optimal student-to-teacher ratios.

Helix currently operates three successful schools within the greater Baton area:

- Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy    Progress Letter Grade = C  
School Performance Score = C/65.7  
Grades 9-12 with 511 students in attendance
- Helix Aviation Academy  
School Performance Score = C/68.3    Progress Letter Grade = A  
Grades K-9 with 383 students in attendance
- Helix Legal Academy  
School Performance Score = F/49.6    Progress Letter Grade = C  
Grades 6-8 with 127 students in attendance

Because of Helix's strong record of academic achievement, effective model for academic support and experienced leadership team, I respectfully recommend that you accept the recommendation from Helix Community Schools.



**CHARTER PROPOSAL REVIEW SUMMARY (Rubric)**  
**EXPERIENCED OPERATOR APPLICATION 2025**  
**HELIX COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

| Section           |   | Evidence  |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Executive Summary | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>ES.1 *1. Outline in a clear statement that defines the fundamental purpose of this school and why it should exist in alignment with state charter school law (Louisiana R.S.17:3972).</p> <p>*2. Outline in a clear statement the proposed school's vision that describes how the school will operate and the long-term impacts it will achieve to be successful.</p> <p>ES.2 *1. Describe the community and student population the school seeks to serve (e.g. demographics, jurisdiction, and educational needs).</p> <p>*2. Use evidence to clearly articulate the main challenges to student success in the community in which the school seeks to locate.</p> <p>ES.3 *1. Provide a concise overview of the proposed educational program for the proposed school.</p> <p>*2. Project enrollment per grade level, per year, for the contract term.</p> <p>*3. Provide a rationale for seeking to serve the identified student population.</p> <p>ES.4 *1. Describe how the proposed program will positively impact student outcomes.</p> | <p>Helix Community Schools seeks to expand on the success of its network of innovative, career-focused public schools, by converting two existing public schools in the Baker School District into Type 3 charter schools: Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School. According to the application, these schools will operate as part of the Helix Community Schools network, leveraging a proven model that emphasizes academic excellence, specialized competencies for high-demand jobs, social-emotional support through mentoring and equity for all students.</p> <p>Under Helix's leadership, Park Ridge Academic Magnet will expand its enrollment to serve more students in grades K-8 and will be open to all students residing in the city of Baker.</p> <p>According to the application, Baker High School will continue serving students in grades 9-12 with enrollment increased incrementally to accommodate community demand according to the application.</p> <p>Helix proposes to significantly enhance educational opportunities for Baker students resulting in improved student learning outcomes, increased access to innovative</p> |

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|   | <p>ES.5 *1. Demonstrate the ability to continually improve between application cycles by identifying key deficiencies in the prior application and explaining how the deficiencies were improved upon.</p>  | <p>educational practices, and greater educational equity.</p> <p>The applicant plans to serve the Baker community, which is comprised of 22.2% economically disadvantaged students and 12%-15% of students who qualify for special education services.</p> <p>Key challenges recognized by Helix include gaps in academic achievement, limited access to specialized and career-focused educational pathways and insufficient social-emotional resources.</p> <p>Helix plans to address these challenges by expanding academic programming, introducing specialized concentrations in financial technology and performing arts and implementing comprehensive social-emotional mentoring programs. Recruiting and retaining top faculty and staff is a priority for the applicant.</p> |
| <p>Educational Program &amp; Capacity:<br/>School Establishment</p> | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>EPC.6 *1. Provide a clear rationale for selecting the community based on community demographics and educational needs.</p> <p>*2. Provide evidence that the proposed school will be able to more effectively serve the community than the options that currently exist.</p> <p>*3. Clearly explain any partnerships or contractual relationships regarding the</p> | <p>The city of Baker faces significant socioeconomic challenges, with a poverty rate of 22.2% and a median household income of \$59,451, which is below the state average.</p> <p>In the past, Baker schools' academic performance was ranked in the lower academic percentiles statewide.</p> <p>In addition, state averages for homelessness suggest that approximately 2-3% of students in the community may</p>  |

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|                                 | <p>proposed school's operations or mission.</p> <p>EPC.7 *1. Provide an overview of the proposed student population, including the anticipated racial and socioeconomic demographics, percentage of special education students, percentage of English Learners, and percentage of homeless students.</p> <p>EPC.8 *1. Provide evidence that a range of stakeholders (e.g. students, parents/caregivers, teachers, school staff, community leaders, local government officials, and/or social services) were engaged in the charter application development process. Engagement of parents/caregivers as a stakeholder group is required.</p> <p>*2. Provide specific information regarding the strategies used to solicit community input throughout the process of developing the charter application.</p> <p>Appendix 1 *1. Provide documentation signifying evidence of community support. Documentation (e.g., letters of support from community stakeholders, emails with evidence of support, sign-in sheets, and/or survey results) must include evidence of parent/caregiver support.</p> | <p>experience homelessness during the school year. These three factors, according to the application, underscore the need for innovative educational models that can effectively address the academic needs of students.</p> <p>According to the application, Helix has conducted meaningful conversations with parents, educators, and community leaders regarding the proposed school conversions. Many voiced a desire for stronger academic support and expanded educational opportunities.</p> <p>In addition, Helix has engaged with current educators and staff at Baker schools, community leaders, local clergy and city officials. A clear outcome voiced by many is the hope for high-quality educational opportunities that keep families in the current school district and prepare students for meaningful post-secondary success.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to convert Park Ridge Academic Magnet and Baker High School into Type 3 charter schools, implementing a STEAM-focused curriculum (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) with a specialized concentration in financial technology and performing arts.</p> |
| Educational Program & Capacity: | The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:  | The applicant will use data to drive progress toward ambitious goals set for the students. To achieve these goals, the applicant will chart a deliberate  |

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| <p>Academic Plan</p> | <p>EPC.9 *1. Include a clear and concise overview of the proposed school model, including descriptions of the key design elements that align with the academic plan and the proposed school’s mission and vision.</p> <p>*2. Provide a clear rationale for the selection of the given school model and key design elements based on either:</p> <p>a. A track record of success with similar student populations (proven models)</p> <p>b. Evidence-based justification that the proposed model is likely to be successful (innovative, untested models)</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group provides an overview of existing schools in their portfolio and details key elements that differentiate the proposed school.</p> <p>EPC.10 *1. Identify the core curriculum that will be utilized in the proposed school and provide evidence of the selected curricula meeting grade progression, grade level standards, and state graduation requirements.</p> <p>*2. Provide evidence that the selected curriculum adheres to quality indicators on the state instructional materials review rubrics.</p> <p>*3. If the proposed charter school will implement a specialized academic model:</p> <p>Provide a narrative description of the specialized curriculum that will be implemented and explain how students will demonstrate proficiency in the specialized areas of the academic model (e.g., STEM).</p> | <p>path with specific time-bound benchmarks to improve student achievement. Along the way, the applicant will regularly collect and analyze data to plan and execute individually tailored interventions to keep students on course.</p> <p>STEAM-based opportunities, including digital media, engineering, financial technology, arts and robotics will be offered according to the application.</p> <p>The academic track record for Helix schools in EBR:</p> <p>Helix Mentorship STEAM<br/> Grades 9-12 511 Students<br/> 2023 = SPS = C/70.3<br/> 2024 = SPS = C/65.7 (-4.6)<br/> Assessments = F<br/> Progress Rating = C<br/> ACT = F<br/> Graduation Rate = A<br/> Strength of Diploma = B</p> <p>Helix Aviation<br/> Grades K-9 383 Students<br/> 2023 = SPS = D/55.1<br/> 2024 = SPS = C/68.3 (+13.2)<br/> Assessments = F<br/> Progress Rating = A</p> <p>Helix Legal Academy<br/> Grades 6-8 127 Students<br/> 2023 = SPS = F/41.2<br/> 2024 = SPS = F/49.6<br/> Assessments = F<br/> Progress Rating = C</p> <p>Of note is that over 90% of students at Helix schools receive free or reduced-price lunch.</p> |
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|  |  | <p>Curricula for the proposed school were vetted based on whether the curricula had a Tier 1 designation by LDOE, alignment with the proposed schools' mission, opportunities for professional development, depth/clarity of supporting resources and the ability to differentiate and support students with special needs.</p> <p>The applicant seeks to use the following curricula:<br/>         ELA K-8 = Wit and Wisdom<br/>         ELA 9-12 = HMH Collections</p> <p>Math K-5 = Eureka Math with Zearn Math for teacher-led and digital support<br/>         Math 6-12 = Eureka Math</p> <p>Science K-8 = Amplify<br/>         Science 9-12 = Helix Science<br/>         Curriculum aligned to Next Generation Science Standards<br/>         (There is currently no state approved curriculum aligned to the LA State Standards)</p> <p>SS K-3 = Helix SS Curriculum aligned to LA GLEs and using Wit &amp; Wisdom themes to deepen context knowledge<br/>         SS 4-12 Helix SS Curriculum supplemented by the DBQ Project (Tier 1 supplemental resource) and AP Resources</p> <p>Project Lead the Way, the curriculum for STEAM, is a nationally recognized curriculum focused on coding, engineering, and collaborative problem solving and is designed by professionals in education, science, engineering, and the medical industries. PLTW</p> |
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|  | <p>EPC.11 *1. Provide a logical, feasible, and comprehensive plan to implement a hybrid learning model when necessary.</p> <p>*2. Clearly define the circumstances under which a hybrid model would be implemented.</p> <p>*3. Demonstrate a feasible plan to acquire and disseminate technology in the event a hybrid model is implemented.</p> <p>*4. Explain how student attendance will be tracked and monitored, including attendance notifications to parents/caregivers about their children.</p> <p>*5. Define technical support that will be afforded to students and families regarding the Learning Management System (LMS) and student access to the virtual environment.</p> <p>*6. Outline the communication plan for students, families, and staff during the implementation of a hybrid learning model.</p> | <p>engages students in hands-on activities, projects, and real-world challenges critical to the STEAM component.</p> <p>The ELA and math curriculums are currently rated Tier 1 by the LDOE. Science and SS curriculums are closely aligned with the Louisiana State Standards in the absence of designated Tier I curriculums.</p> <p>According to the application, "...charter operators seeking to expand must demonstrate strong performance in their existing schools." The applicant points to the high graduation rate and diploma strength at Helix Mentorship, the "C" letter grade with an "A" Progress Index at Helix Aviation and the improved SPS at Helix Legal.</p> <p>Plans for a hybrid learning model are not apparent in the application.</p> |
| Educational Program & Capacity: Academic Goals | <p>EPC.12 *1. Provide a list and description of the charter school's measurable academic goals for each year of the first five years of operation and how they are aligned to LEAP 2025, ACT, and graduation rate.</p> <p>*2. Provide a clear plan that outlines the methods and frequency by which student data will be collected.</p> <p>*3. Describe a data-driven decision-making process to inform student performance goals.</p> <p>*4. Explain the plan for providing professional development to the faculty and staff on analyzing and responding to data.</p>   | <p>Overarching goals for the proposed schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students will demonstrate proficiency on state math/ELA assessments by their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at a Helix school until mastery is achieved</li> <li>• Students 2 or more years below grade level will grow 2 grade levels per year until on level</li> <li>• All other students will grow at least 1.5 grade levels per year</li> </ul>  |

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|  |  | <p>Helix model for academic support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather baseline data (LEAP 360, Star 360, NWEA, MAP, ACT at appropriate grade levels) during the summer and set long/short term progress goals at summer in-service</li> <li>• Set goals at grade, class and individual student levels (students will grow 1.5 – 2.0 years academically and demonstrate proficiency by their 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Helix schools)</li> <li>• Professional Learning Communities drive weekly teacher planning meetings</li> <li>• Interim Assessments-aligned with state assessments</li> <li>• Math and ELA Labs for students—2-3 times weekly</li> <li>• Student Mentoring—a priority at PLC meetings culminating in a plan for social-emotional support conversations with students</li> </ul> <p>According to the application for the proposed school, “...ongoing support and professional development is central to our academic vision.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week-long summer in-service dedicated to systems of the school, team building, curriculum training and strategies to support students.</li> </ul> |
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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom walk-throughs weekly with immediate feedback</li> <li>• Observation/coaching cycles every 6 weeks using the COMPASS rubric as designed by the LDOE</li> <li>• PLC meetings twice weekly focused on data analysis, interventions, professional development and curriculum alignment</li> <li>• Targeted external professional development</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Educational Program and Capacity: LA Accountability System-Academic Performance</p> | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>EPC.13 *1. Provide a comprehensive narrative explanation of performance data including a description of all known performance deficiencies, the current and historical status of subgroup performance, and specific information about schools that fall below Bulletin 126 requirements and why they do not meet the bar.</p> <p>*2. Detail the strategies used to remedy performance deficiencies, as described by the applicant group, address each performance deficiency and ensure the applicant group's track record demonstrates growth toward correcting similar performance deficiencies.</p> <p>*3. (If single site currently) Meet the academic expectations for operators according to BESE Bulletin 126 or provides a thorough explanation of the growth towards meeting expectations and a timeline to do so.</p> | <p>While the performance of Helix Mentorship STEAM Academy has declined slightly recently, the school remains one of the strongest-performing high schools in Baton Rouge with a similar student demographic. The school earned strong graduation outcomes (91% cohort graduation rate) and a high Strength of Diploma Index (94.5).</p> <p>Helix Aviation Academy has shown strong growth from 2023 to 2024, improving the school's SPS by 13 points.</p> <p>Helix Legal achieved an 8.4-point gain from 2023 to 2024. The applicant cites Helix's instructional model and intervention strategies as reasons for this growth.</p> <p>To improve student achievement, the applicant cites the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network-wide academic/operational strategies, intensified instructional coaching,</li> </ul> |

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|   | <p>*4. Provide a description of the school performance of comparable schools within the ESP'S portfolio, to include:<br/> ***Currently operating in Louisiana: School Performance Score (SPS) and Progress Index Equivalent OR<br/> ***Not currently operating in Louisiana: State achievement and growth scores. (Comparable school = school serving similar population and the grade levels as the intended school).</p> <p>*5. Provide an analysis demonstrating portfolio performance that supports the creation/replication of the proposed new school.</p> <p>*6. Submit an analysis of under-performance and plans for remediation for areas in need of improvement.</p>   | <p>hands-on support to teachers, regular data reviews, co-planning of lessons and targeted professional development aligned with Louisiana's academic standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust interim assessment systems</li> <li>• Recruitment/retention of high-quality teachers and support personnel</li> <li>• Lessons learned from initial implementation challenges as it relates to instruction</li> <li>• A thoughtful approach to continuous improvement</li> </ul>  |
| Educational Program & Capacity: Assessments | <p>The charter proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>EPC.14 *1. Provide a clear description of each primary diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment the proposed school will use to evaluate student knowledge, including the purpose, design, and format of each.</p> <p>*2. Provide a clear description of the standards the proposed school will use to evaluate student knowledge if adopting or developing additional academic standards beyond state and authorizer standards.</p> <p>*3. Provide exit standards each student should be able to meet upon conclusion of grade level/content area if adopting or developing additional academic standards beyond state and authorizer standards.</p> <p>*4. Clearly articulate the process and frequency by which assessment data will be collected and analyzed.</p> | <p>According to the application for the proposed schools, proper diagnostic assessment will be conducted in a week-long in-service session designed for staff to discuss and map data prior to the opening of school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-8 LEAP 360 diagnostics</li> <li>• 9-12 NWEA, MAP and ACT practice assessments</li> <li>• State assessment data</li> </ul> <p>Interim assessments will regularly monitor students' progress toward their goals: LEAP 360 assessments include an initial diagnostic and 3 interim assessments over the course of the year.</p> <p>Wit &amp; Wisdom (ELA) makes use of curricular assessments and Star 360 as assessment tools. Eureka Math produces in-depth reports on what students are</p> |

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|  | <p>*5. Describe a data-driven decision-making process that informs all crucial aspects of the school's proposed model including instructional and programmatic offerings, curricular choice, and professional development opportunities.</p>  | <p>learning and what they are struggling with. This data is formulated at school, grade, class and individual levels and readily available for planning purposes.</p> <p>Assessments are reviewed daily, weekly, monthly and yearly in team meetings, PLC's and in the summer institute.</p>  |
| <p>Educational Program &amp; Capacity:<br/>Diverse Learners &amp; Student Supports</p> | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>EPC.15 *1. Regarding Students with Disabilities (SWD), English Language Learners (Els), students who are academically behind, and students who are academically advanced, create a plan that includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures for the identification of student disabilities (LA Bulletin 1508).</li> <li>Creation and implementation of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that align with grade level skills (LA Bulletin 1530).</li> <li>Description of how student performance will be used to personalize instruction.</li> <li>Monitoring of student progress in accordance with student IEPs.</li> </ol> <p>*2. Outline clear steps that will be taken as corrective action should data suggest that subgroup disproportionality and/or over-identification have occurred.<br/>Els:</p> <p>*1. Ensure that the plan for Els includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures for the identification of students as English Language Learners (EL Guidebook)</li> <li>A service delivery model</li> </ol> | <p>According to the application, HCS is committed to serving the diverse needs of all students enrolled at Park Ridge Academic Magnet School and Baker High School. Their approach to supporting students with disabilities, English learners, students who are academically behind, and those who are academically advanced is rooted in equity, legal compliance, and a belief in the potential of every child. To this end, HCS will implement a comprehensive academic and student support framework that integrates rigorous instruction, targeted intervention, and specialized services to ensure all students thrive in a high-quality educational program.</p> <p>Helix anticipates 12% to 15% of students will qualify for special education services. According to the application, HCA is fully committed to ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Both schools will develop and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) tailored to the specific academic and behavioral needs of each student with disabilities. These programs will</p> |

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|  | <p>c. An English Language Development (ELD) Curriculum supplemented to standard curriculum for instruction and support.</p> <p>d. Creation and implementation of Individualized Learning Plan (ILP).</p> <p>e. Monitoring student performance in accordance with ILPs.</p> <p>*2. An outline of clear steps that will be taken as corrective action should data suggest that subgroup disproportionality and/or over-identification have occurred.</p> <p>Academically Behind:</p> <p>*1. Ensure that the plan includes:</p> <p>a. A plan for monitoring student progress in accordance with student intervention plans.</p> <p>b. Identification of instructional materials to be utilized for intervention support.</p> <p>*2. An outline of clear steps that will be taken as corrective action should data suggest that subgroup disproportionality and/or over-identification have occurred.</p> <p>Academically Ahead (Only if planning to offer a Gifted/Talented program:</p> <p>*1. Ensure that the plan includes:</p> <p>a. Procedures for the identification of student abilities (LA Bulletin 1508)</p> <p>b. Creation and implementation of Individualized Education plans (IEPs) (LA Bulletin 1530).</p> <p>c. Ensure that a description of how student performance will be used to personalize instruction.</p> <p>d. Description of how monitoring of student progress in accordance with student IEPs.</p> <p>*2. Outline clear steps that will be taken as corrective action should data</p> | <p>be delivered through a continuum of services supported by trained special education professionals, paraprofessionals, and intervention specialists.</p> <p>Regarding EL students, Helix will implement a research-based language acquisition program that includes small-group instruction, embedded supports with Tier 1 curricula, and supplemental materials to facilitate English proficiency.</p> <p>Helix is also committed to meeting the needs of students who are academically advanced through differentiation within the classroom, lab experiences designed to extend and enrich learning coupled with assignments designed to deepen students' understanding and encourage higher order thinking skills.</p> <p>High school students may access accelerated coursework through dual enrollment and project-based learning in FinTech and Performing Arts. These pathways provide rigorous academic opportunities and real-world applications, ensuring that advanced learners remain challenged and engaged.</p> <p>The applicant will comply with and support the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and will ensure that homeless students have equitable access to a quality education including immediate enrollment, adequate transportation</p> |
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|  | suggest that subgroup disproportionality and/or over-identification have occurred.   | services, and access to school supplies and social services.  |
| Educational Program & Capacity:<br>Behavior Management | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>EPC.16 *1. Provide a detailed overview of the proposed school's intended approach to student discipline, behavior intervention, classroom management, and the process by which students and families are made aware of these policies on, at minimum, an annual basis.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the proposed school's discipline policies clearly outline the interventions and consequences that the school will use as an alternative to suspension or expulsion.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the proposed school's policies protect and outline a student's right to due process and the process by which a student or family may appeal the school's decision to expel a student.</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group has a plan for the ongoing review of student data to protect against disproportionate suspension or expulsion of students belonging to historically marginalized subgroups and provides clear steps that will be taken as corrective action should data suggest that subgroup disproportionality has occurred.</p> <p>*5. Ensure that the applicant group has a detailed plan for the alternate setting of suspended/expelled students.</p> <p>Appendix 2 *Describe the plan for positive behavior support, safe school planning, parental and community involvement, inter-agency cooperation,</p> | <p>According to the application, HCS will implement a restorative, equity-centered behavior management model that supports the academic and social-emotional growth of all students. This approach emphasizes preventative strategies, positive behavioral interventions and responsive support systems which will be incorporated into the daily life of the school.</p> <p>Each family will receive a student handbook at the beginning of the school year outlining the school's behavior expectations, code of conduct, and due process procedures. These expectations will be reviewed during student orientation, family engagement nights, and regular classroom meetings and teachers will reinforce these expectations through daily classroom rituals and consistent modeling of respectful interactions.</p> <p>Students who struggle with behavior will be supported through mentoring, restorative conversations, counseling sessions, behavior reflection forms, and structured check-ins with staff.</p> <p>Helix will closely monitor suspension/expulsion data to identify any patterns of disproportionality or over-identification of any student subgroups.</p> |

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|  | student records, Families in Need of Services (FINS), and statement of compliance in their School Model Master Plan.  |  |
| Educational Program & Capacity:<br>Parent & Community Engagement | <p>EPC.17 *1. Detail a specific plan to encourage strong partnerships with families and community stakeholders that outlines specific opportunities for engagement that reflect a clear attempt to provide access for all families by ensuring that opportunities for engagement vary (e.g., by time, type, and response options).</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group's plan for family and community engagement includes formal structures by which the proposed school will seek family and community input about decisions and solicit feedback about the school.</p> <p>Appendix 3 *1. Ensure that the applicant group outlines a clear procedure by which families, students, and community stakeholders may share concerns and submit grievances. The policy must include how complaints may be filed, procedures for investigation and response, how decisions can be appealed, and how complaints are escalated to the board.</p> | <p>According to the application, Helix is committed to building and sustaining partnerships with parents, guardians, and the broader Baker community. While their plan is for robust pre-opening engagement efforts-including town halls, educator interviews, and parent surveys, their commitment to community partnerships will continue long after school doors open.</p> <p>Both schools will implement a comprehensive family engagement plan including newsletters, email updates, text message alerts, and social media platforms. Parents will be invited to campus throughout the year for academic-focused events such as open houses, curriculum nights, and student exhibitions.</p> <p>Helix will establish mechanisms for parents and the community to offer feedback on a regular basis.</p> |
| Growth Plan  | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>GP.18 *Regarding policies and practices such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. promotion and graduation policy</li> <li>b. instructional leadership role</li> <li>c. teacher and school leader evaluation policies</li> </ul>  | <p>According to the application for the proposed school, the applicant will follow the same promotion and graduation policies used across the Helix network.</p> <p>Promotion for K-8: mastery of grade-level content, student growth as measured by benchmark assessments and teacher recommendation.</p>   |



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|  | <p>d. hiring processes including qualifications and responsibilities for instructional administrative staff</p> <p>e. food service</p> <p>f. transportation.</p> <p>*1. Provide a comprehensive overview of any policies and practices to be changed, including the rationale behind such changes.</p> <p>*2. Demonstrate how the changes proposed to existing practices align with the mission and vision proposed for the new school.</p> <p>*3. Provide a specific timeline with clear tasks, owners, and deliverables and is demonstrably likely to complete all policy and/or practice updates in time for effective implementation on the first day of school.</p> <p>GP.19 *1. Using evidence-based rationale, ensure that the applicant group articulates how the proposed school will enhance the organization's ability to serve students in Louisiana.</p> <p>GP.20 *1. Provide a complete and comprehensive list of all current past litigation including the outcomes and/or demands identified as part of arbitration.</p> <p>*2. Provide complete and comprehensive information detailing the circumstances that led to contract termination, voluntary closures, and/or non-renewal of a charter contract as decided by the school's authorizer.</p> <p>*3. Provide complete and comprehensive information detailing the circumstances in which agreements between the management organization or education services provider and the</p> | <p>High school students will be subject to Louisiana's graduation requirements of credit accumulation, end-of-course assessments and participation in required testing. No changes to current graduation policies are anticipated.</p> <p>HCS is currently evaluating options for food service and transportation to align with existing operational practices.</p> <p>According to the application, the hiring processes will mirror that of existing Helix schools. Instructional/administrative staff will be recruited through a screening for cultural alignment, interviews and demonstration lessons or performance tasks. All hiring decisions will be made collaboratively according to the application.</p> <p>Helix intends to prioritize recruitment from the existing teachers within the Baker school system. Other sources of recruitment will be universities such as LSU, SU, UL, and the LRCE.</p> <p>According to the application, each campus for the proposed schools will be led by a principal and supported by one or more assistant principals (depending on enrollment), a dean of academics and instructional coaches. These leaders will receive direct supervision from the Regional Chief Academic Officer and Director of Achievement and participate in</p> |
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|  | <p>nonprofit charter school board were severed.</p> <p>*4. Provide complete and comprehensive information detailing the circumstances in which the organization has previously received approval to open a charter school but failed to do so.</p> <p>*5. Provide clear and compelling evidence that the issues leading to the outcomes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. current/past litigation</li> <li>b. contract termination</li> <li>c. school voluntarily closed or not renewed</li> <li>d. non-openings</li> </ul> <p>have been addressed, safeguards put in place to avoid recurrence of such incidents, and that these updated policies, procedures and safeguards are demonstrably likely to avoid future recurrence of previously experienced negative outcomes.</p> | <p>a network-wide leadership cohort.</p> <p>Items GP 20 #1, 2, 3, 4, 5 are not applicable.</p>  |
| Organizational Plan & Capacity: Staffing | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>OPC.21 *1. Provide roles and responsibilities for the governing board, school's leadership team, management team, and any other entities described.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the relationship between the Education Service Provider (ESP) and the charter board is clearly defined.</p> <p>OPC.22 *1. Provide a thorough explanation of the reporting structure and a rationale demonstrating that the proposed lines of accountability and reporting support the school model.</p>   | <p>The HCS Board consists of:</p> <p>President of HCS-Preston J. Castille, Jr.<br/>Regional Chief Academic Officer--Charita Sellers<br/>Director of Achievement—Alisha Welsh<br/>Academic Achievement Advisor--Sandra Douglas<br/>(Relevant skill sets and responsibilities for the above-mentioned leadership team are listed on pages 20 and 21 of the application. All members of the leadership team are highly qualified for their positions and bring appropriate expertise to the table)</p> <p>The Board of Directors, HCS Baton Rouge, for the proposed schools will be the same board</p> |

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|  | <p>OPC.23 *1. Ensure that pupil-teacher ratios are in accordance with LA. R.S. 17:7: (2)(a) and that funding shall be at the pupil-teacher ratio of twenty students to one classroom teacher for kindergarten through grade three and twenty-five students to one classroom teacher for grades four through six.</p> <p>OPC.24 *1. Outline clear procedures regarding recruitment of qualified teacher candidates, position offers, employee discipline, and employee dismissal. Procedures include verified background checks, including third-party contracted staff, and adherence to general provisions for non-discriminatory practices.</p> <p>OPC.25 *1. Propose a plan that is feasible to ensure class coverage and includes provisions regarding teacher reassignment, sabbatical coverage, and/or contracted substitute teachers.</p> <p>OPC.26 *1. Ensure that the group's recruitment plan outlines a reasonable timeline with key hiring milestones that the proposed school must meet to be fully staffed for each year of growth.<br/>*2. Ensure that the applicant group has a thorough understanding of the organization's capacity to meet hiring demands of growth.</p> | <p>as the Helix Aviation Academy. According to the application, HCS Baton Rouge will contract with Helix Community Schools, a charter school management company, which is governed by a separate board of directors.</p> <p>Helix Community Schools, with the oversight/approval of the board, will supervise qualified school principals for the two new schools. Principals will report to Charita Sellers, Helix's Chief Regional Academic Officer who will be responsible for all academic/instructional partnerships and matters of operation.</p> <p>According to the application, "...a critical component of the scale strategy will be attracting funds to support growth efforts. In line w/this need, Helix will identify and secure sustainable sources of funding, including but not limited to non-profit grant funds to support capacity building. This support will allow HCS to expand, confident that the leadership team is well-prepared and that the network will not need to pull money from instructional support to make the necessary long-term investments that come with starting a new school."</p> <p>According to the application, board members bring expertise to the table in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• academics</li> <li>• finances</li> <li>• legal issues</li> <li>• management/operations</li> </ul> |
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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community relations</li> </ul> <p>According to the application, the hiring process for the Baker schools will mirror that of existing Helix schools. Instructional/administrative staff will be recruited through a rigorous process that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• screening for cultural alignment</li> <li>• interviews with school and network leaders</li> <li>• demonstration lessons</li> <li>• performance tasks</li> </ul> <p>Administrative leaders must demonstrate successful prior leadership experience, deep instructional knowledge and commitment to continuous improvement.</p> <p>All hiring decisions will be made collaboratively between the principal and network leadership.</p> |
| Organizational Plan & Capacity:<br>School Leadership Team Capacity | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>Appendix 4 *1. Ensure that the school leader demonstrates the capacity to lead the school and improve student outcomes.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that, if identified, the school leadership team has held past leadership positions in which they held a high level of responsibility and accountability for the operations and/or finances of a given organization. If not identified, the job descriptions provided require experience in a role that holds a high level of responsibility and accountability for the operations and/or finances for a given organization.</p> | <p>The principal of the proposed school has not yet been selected.</p> <p>According to the application, the strength of Helix Community Schools' leadership team is a foundational component of the network's success. The leadership team that will lead the expansion efforts consists primarily of the following:</p> <p>Preston J. Castille, Jr.—<br/>President, Helix Community Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjunct law professor at LSU and Southern University</li> <li>• Partner at Taylor, Porter, Brooks &amp; Phillips until retirement</li> </ul>   |

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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected to Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education serving District 8</li> </ul> <p>Charita Sellers-Regional Chief Academic Officer of Helix Aviation Academy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under her leadership the school has grown from 40 to 380 students, expanded its aviation curriculum and hired a full-time flight instructor</li> <li>• Holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in educational leadership with 15+ years of experience</li> </ul> <p>Alisa Welsh-Director of Achievement, HCS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former principal at Madison Prep for 16 yrs</li> <li>• Madison Prep earned a National Blue-Ribbon Award from the US Department of Education in 2016 under her leadership</li> <li>• Holds a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree</li> </ul> <p>Sandra Douglas-Academic Achievement Advisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationally recognized school turnaround specialist</li> <li>• 40+ years of experience</li> <li>• Former Chief Academic Officer and Lead Principal at GEO Academies of GBR</li> <li>• Holds a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree</li> </ul> |
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| <p>Organizational Plan and Capacity:<br/>Charter Board Governance</p> | <p>OPC.27 *1. Describe board members' described role on the board and area of expertise for school management<br/>*2. For each of the following areas, ensure that there is at least one board member able to provide expertise – academic, operational, and financial.<br/>*3. (Applicable to Type 2 Charter Applicants) Ensure that the board is comprised of at least five board members.</p> <p>Appendix 5: *1. Provide a resume for every member of the board.<br/>*2. (Applicable to Type 2 Charter Applicants) Ensure that the board is representative of the community in which the charter school is located and no fewer than 60% of its members reside in the community in which the charter school is located.</p> <p>OPC.28 *1. Provide an accurate description of any existing relationships that the board may have that could pose an actual or perceived conflict of interest.<br/>*2. Ensure that the applicant communicates how the board uses a logical process by which they identify any actual or perceived conflicts of interest and the steps that the board will take to ensure that all potential conflicts of interest are avoided.<br/>*3. If applicable: Ensure that the board of the proposed school provides an accurate description of any existing or potential relationships that could pose an actual or perceived conflict of interest between the board and the ESP or the ESP and an affiliated business entity.</p> | <p>According to the application, the governance systems created by the board are informed by the criterion of high-quality charter schools described in the Charter School Performance Compact, the metrics used by Louisiana to determine the school's School Performance Score, and the unique mission of Helix to provide students access to opportunities in STEAM, agriculture, healthcare, Artificial Intelligence, and energy related fields. The roles of board members are therefore clearly defined by these guiding principles.</p> <p>Complete resumes for board members are available in Appendix A of the application.</p> <p>HCS has an up-to-date conflict-of-interest policy. According to the policy, board members have a duty to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest where a conflict of interest is defined as a "transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer/director of the organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction." The full policy is available upon request.</p> |
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|  | <p>OPC.29 *1. Ensure that the applicant group’s response demonstrates a clear understanding that the charter board serves as a governing body rather than the entity responsible for the day-to-day execution of the proposed school model and academic plan.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group’s response demonstrates a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the charter board about governance of the school and supervision of the school leader, CEO, or Educational Services Provider (ESP) (as applicable).</p> <p>*3. Ensure that each committee, advisory body, or council that exists as part of the charter board governance structure has a legitimate purpose, defined role, and clear responsibilities that support the work of the charter board.</p> <p>OPC.30 *1. Ensure that the applicant group provides a detailed list and description of the charter school’s measurable organizational and financial goals for each of the first five years of operation.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group provides organizational and financial goals that are specific, reasonable, ambitious yet attainable, and are aligned to, at a minimum, the expectations outlined in the <u>Charter School Performance Compact</u>.</p> <p>OPC.31 *1. Ensure that the board has a logical and feasible plan by which they will monitor the proposed school’s progress toward academic, organizational, and financial goals stated in the application and outline the</p> | <p>According to the application, the Board of Directors for HCS is ultimately responsible for the success of the schools under their governance. HCS further understands their roles and responsibilities. Because of the importance of this responsibility, the board has created clear systems to regularly assess the operations, finance, and academic achievement of the schools governed.</p> <p>According to the application, the board also recognizes that, to be effective in this oversight, critical skill sets and perspectives must be represented on the board.</p> <p>Members of the board have expertise in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academics</li> <li>• Management &amp; Operations</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Civil Engineering</li> <li>• Legal—specifically regarding charter schools</li> <li>• School Governance</li> </ul> <p>According to the application, the Board of Directors meets regularly, and legal and financial representation is present at each meeting. Appropriate updates and decisions are made at regularly scheduled board meetings.</p> |
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|  | <p>actions that will be taken if the school is not on track to meet academic goals, organizational goals, and/or financial goals.</p> <p>OPC.32 *1. Ensure that the applicant group articulates a specific set of standards that the school leader must satisfy to keep the school on track to achieve its vision. These standards must, at a minimum, reflect the performance metrics outlined in the <u>Charter School Performance Compact</u>.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the board identifies the information that will be used to determine if the school leader/CEO has satisfied each standard, the timeline and frequency by which performance will be evaluated, and the process by which they will collect that information.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group describes the corrective action process the board and school leader will take in the event the leader does not meet accountability measures.</p> <p>OPC.33 *1. Ensure that the applicant group provides a comprehensive description of the policies and procedures that will be used for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the policies and procedures described are aligned with best practices and are demonstrably likely to sustain the financial health of the organization while maintaining compliance with all legal and statutory responsibilities related to the use of public funding.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the personnel and/or positions directly responsible for managing and overseeing the school's budget process possess the appropriate</p> | <p>Three meetings that hold strategic importance for the governance of Helix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School year launch</li> <li>• End of calendar year</li> <li>• Two-day retreat at the end of each school year</li> </ul> <p>According to the application, the president receives an annual performance evaluation. The following areas are evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational performance</li> <li>• Community leadership</li> <li>• Human resource management</li> <li>• Financial stability</li> <li>• Board leadership</li> </ul> <p>The president receives scores based on a 4-point scale from "Outstanding" to "Improvement Needed."</p> <p>The evaluation is conducted by the board officers at the annual retreat and then submitted for approval by the full board.</p> <p>Following the evaluation, the president develops strategies to address areas rated "Average" or "Needs Improvement."</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) leads the development of annual budgets with school/network leadership, ensuring that each budget reflects strategic goals, anticipated growth and evolving student needs. The CFO manages cash flow, vendor relationships and oversees</p> |
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|  | <p>background and expertise and the management and oversight processes outlined by the applicant group are demonstrably likely to ensure the proposed school's financial health and viability. <i>Also ensure that if a specific person has not yet been identified, the applicant group provides the required qualifications for the person who will eventually be hired to oversee this process.</i></p> <p>*4. Ensure that the internal controls, as described by the applicant group, are demonstrably likely to ensure the accuracy of reporting, eliminate fraud, and protect the resources of the school.</p> <p>OPC.34 *1. Ensure that the board articulates a logical process by which they will assess their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as a comprehensive training plan that corresponds with lacking areas of expertise.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the board articulates a logical new member recruitment plan that prioritizes the required areas of expertise, as well as a logical new member onboarding plan that ensures that all new members are familiar with board bylaws and requirements.</p> <p>OPC.35 *1. Ensure that the applicant group outlines board meeting frequency and an overview of procedures that the board will follow to maintain compliance with Open Meetings Laws and Open Records Act.</p> <p>Appendix 6 *1. Ensure that a preliminary review of the draft bylaws reflects key requirements such as meeting frequency, officers, committees, and number of board members.</p> | <p>audits and compliance reporting.</p> <p>The CFO manages finances based on Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and state and federal compliance requirements.</p> <p>The CFO oversees all financial reporting, budgeting, and grant compliance, ensuring that every dollar is tracked, allocated, and spent responsibly.</p> <p>The CFO and finance team report directly to the president and board of HCS to ensure all finances are accurately accounted for in the school's financial statements.</p> <p>Prospective board members are identified by the nominating committee. Potential candidates are screened to ensure they are aligned with the mission/values of HCS and to ensure they can dedicate the necessary time to their board service. Approved candidates are then recommended by the nominating committee for a vote by the whole board.</p> <p>According to the application, the board meets regularly.</p> |
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| Financial Plan & Capacity:<br>Operational Management and Leadership | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>FPC.36 *1. Ensure that the organizational role of team members matches their professional skill set.<br/>*2. For each of the following areas, ensure there is at least one member of the leadership team able to provide expertise on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staffing</li> <li>• professional development</li> <li>• performance management</li> <li>• general operations</li> <li>• facilities management</li> </ul> <p>(If all members of the leadership team have not yet been identified, include a job description for open positions that demonstrates the requirements of the above listed areas of expertise).</p> <p>FPC.37 *1. Ensure that the applicant group has a logical and feasible plan for managing non-academic services upon opening and has identified the position(s) responsible for oversight of key operational aspects of the school.<br/>*2. Ensure that the applicant group has a detailed transportation plan that is designed to meet the needs of their special population subgroup.</p> | <p>Leadership team and corresponding professional skills sets:<br/>Arthur Cooper, JD—Significant experience in education and oversight of educational organizations, former managing partner of law firm and investment firm and CEO of prominent research foundation.</p> <p>Timothy S. Burbach—Civil engineer w/a geotechnical background and experience in infrastructure design.</p> <p>Veronica Howard Sizer—Extensive legal experience specifically regarding laws governing charter schools.</p> <p>Dr. Luria Young—significant leadership experience in the field of education K-12 and higher education.</p> <p>Kenneth Fabre—strong legal skills with over 25 years of experience in the legal field.</p> <p>According to the application, HCS is currently evaluating options for food service and transportation with the intent of aligning these services as closely as possible with existing operational practices.</p> |
| Financial Plan & Capacity:<br>Student Enrollment and Recruitment    | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>FPC.38 *1. Provide a legal and logical plan to garner interest in the school and subsequently enroll students including specific details about the enrollment</p>  | <p>According to the application, the proposed schools will primarily serve the local Baker community. HCS welcomes the challenge by setting clear goals, using data to continuously reflect on and refine their strategies of commitment to greater educational opportunities for all students.</p>   |

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|  | <p>process, timeline, and application requirements.</p> <p>*2. Identify potential barriers to access (e.g., lack of internet access, lack of transportation, frequent changes in home address, inability to visit school during work hours, etc.) and has created an enrollment process that mitigates identified barriers.</p> <p>*3. Detail methods by which the proposed school will provide access for all proposed students in accordance with admissions requirements outlined in R.S.17:3991(B)(3).1.</p>   | <p>HCS schools will remain non-selective for all programs and are committed to delivering high-quality education for all students.</p> <p>HCS has already held in-depth conversations with current educators/staff from Baker schools to garner interest in the proposed schools.</p> <p>To gather input and promote transparency, Helix has used a variety of outreach strategies, including town hall meetings and surveys. Through these efforts, Helix has built a foundation of support among families, educators, and civic leaders who share their commitment to expanding access to high-quality, equitable public education in Baker.</p> |
| Financial Plan & Capacity:<br>Financial Plan | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>FPC.39 *1. Ensure that projections are based on accurate, conservative, and legally compliant assumptions.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that no essential services are funded at amounts that would preclude the applicant group from implementing their plan.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that there is no evidence that the school will become insolvent or lack access to the necessary amount of liquidity.</p> <p>*4. (If applicable) Ensure that there are no material findings in the non-profit organization's most recent audited financial statements.</p> | <p>According to the application for the proposed school and regarding a fiscal plan, HCS states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An accurate accounting of the fund budget is central to fiscal responsibility. Review of the fund budget will occur monthly</li> <li>• For the organization to be sustainable, it will be critical to operate according to a balanced budget. Review of the budget will occur monthly</li> <li>• An external audit of finances is essential to the transparency and viability of the organization's health</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>*5. Ensure that the applicant group has provided evidence that any non-guaranteed funding sources included in the budget narrative have already been committed or will be committed and that should these non-guaranteed funds fail to materialize, the applicant group is still able to successfully execute the program described in this application.</p> <p>FPC.40 *1. Ensure that the contingency plans outlined by the applicant group are demonstrably likely to succeed in the event of lower-than-expected revenues and/or higher than expected costs.</p> <p>FPC.41 *1. Ensure that the proposed school has a plan to hire a financial manager who has at least a bachelor's degree in finance and/or accounting, or the school has partnered with an organization staffed by individuals with the necessary expertise that will provide financial management services.</p> <p>Appendix 7 *1. Ensure that if the financial manager or back-office service provider has been identified, a resume is provided.</p> <p>FPC.42 *1. Ensure that the applicant group provides a clear and comprehensive list of any schools not currently meeting the financial requirements and expectations established by the authorizer and/or local or federal policies.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the organization can provide verifiable evidence to show that steps have been taken to address issues of noncompliance or failure to meet expectations as substantiated by</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An external audit will occur annually</li> </ul> <p>The board members primarily responsible for oversight regarding finances are Arthur Cooper, Board Chair, and Timothy Burbach.</p> <p>According to the application, annual operating budgets and budget updates will be prepared by the financial manager working closely with the president, school leadership and operations manager as appropriate.</p> <p>The budget will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and submitted for approval to the full board. Any updated operating budgets with greater than a 5% variance in either revenue or expenses are required to have full board approval after review by the Finance Committee.</p> <p>The annual operating budget will be prepared using conservative assumptions regarding student enrollment, MFP funding, federal funding, and expenses. When budgeting expenses, the school will err on the side of budgeting higher usage and higher per unit costs. In addition, the expense budget will contain a reasonable contingency for unforeseen expenses.</p> <p>If a budget shortfall should arise due to lower enrollment, the school should be able to reduce</p> |
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|                                      | <p>the school's authorizer and/or local and federal authorities.</p> <p>FPC.43 *1. Provide a clear and comprehensive description of the process that will be used to develop the annual budget and the process by which the annual budget may be modified and monitored on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>*2. For virtual applicants, create a detailed plan explaining the process of recruiting and hiring staff needed for in-person and related services, including how it will be funded.</p> <p>Appendix 8 *1. Provide a description of the types of insurance to be procured and coverage amounts.</p>  | <p>staff accordingly or combine positions. The school will identify non-instructional costs including facility, busing, and school administration costs that will have a minimum effect on the quality of education if reduced/eliminated.</p> <p>The question regarding virtual applicants is not applicable.</p> <p>Insurance coverage is not apparent in the application.</p>   |
| High School Addendum (If Applicable) | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>HSA.1 *1. (If applicable) Ensure that all non-essential courses (Coursework NOT required to meet graduation requirements) offered are clearly aligned to the school's proposed model and mission and the applicant group clearly articulates the benefit that each course offers to the intended student population.</p> <p>HSA.2 *1. Ensure that the applicant group identifies the diploma and Jump Start 2.0 pathways and early access to college credit that will be offered to students.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group demonstrates a clear understanding of each diploma pathway available to students in Louisiana and has a logical and feasible plan to ensure that</p> | <p>The following information is included in the application regarding the proposed high school:</p> <p>In addition to a deep commitment to academic excellence in core courses, HCS is also defined by its commitment to providing students with exposure to high-demand industries and will ensure that students can obtain marketable skills related to those industries.</p> <p>Since this commitment is central to the mission of Helix Community Schools, it is important to specify metrics to ensure this commitment is a reality for students. The four metrics selected are designed to monitor both students' exposure to professionals in the field and students' participation</p> |

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|  | <p>students meet all requirements of the chosen diploma pathway in four years or less (five for Transitional 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students).</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group provides a rationale for choosing the specific Jumpstart 2.0 pathway(s) that will be offered to students at the proposed school. Responses should consider factors such as local career opportunities, availability of community partnerships, additional teacher training and/or certification needs, and the degree to which the chosen pathway will realistically provide students opportunities in high-wage, high-demand career fields upon graduation.</p> <p>*4. Provide a clear description of the process by which students will select their desired pathway.</p> <p>*5. Describe the support that will be offered to students during the selection process.</p> <p>*6. Explain the methods by which the proposed school will provide access for all students to diploma pathways.</p> <p>Appendix 9 *1. Ensure that the applicant group's outline of course offerings ensures that all students can meet the graduation requirements of their chosen pathway in four years or less (five for Transitional 9<sup>th</sup> grade students),</p> <p>HSA.3 *1. Identify the Advanced Placement Course Offerings, Dual Enrollment, ACT preparation, and Career and Technical Education Courses that will be offered to students for the first five years of operation, as well as provide a rationale for each one identified.</p> | <p>in project -based learning experiences relative to those fields. The measurement used will be class field trips, visits from relevant professionals, and the student's letter grade in elective classes.</p> <p>According to the application, the following goals for the high school program are critical to student success and will be monitored closely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduation rate—high school graduation is the single most predictive pathway to success for students and a critical component of the schools' School Performance Score</li> <li>• Strength of Diploma—Students need and deserve access to rigorous coursework</li> <li>• ACT scores—Success on the ACT is a powerful tool to create access to world-class post-secondary opportunities</li> <li>• WorkKeys Assessment scores—Primarily for students who prefer to enter directly into a career, WorkKeys is a gateway to this opportunity</li> <li>• EOC scores and passing rate—Success on End of Course tests is critical to progress towards graduation and to ensure students have the core knowledge necessary to be successful</li> </ul> |
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|   | <p>Appendix 10 *1. Using a table, ensure that the applicant group identifies the AP course offerings, IB, Dual Enrollment, ACT preparation, and Career and Technical Education courses offered to students by grade level during the first five years of operation.</p> <p>HSA.4 *1. Identify which Industry-Based Certificate (IBC) assessments will be offered to students on a Jump Start 2.0 pathway.</p> <p>*2. Explain how their selected IBC assessments will result in career opportunities for students.</p> <p>*3. Explain how they will use community resources to assist with their specific Jumpstart 2.0 pathway(s).</p> <p>*4. Explain how their annual budget will support the additional training and/or certifications needed.</p> <p>HSA.5 *1. Identify how students will access work-based learning with clearly defined program options, specifying roles for the teacher/coordinator, school system, and classroom instruction. Ensure that the plan adheres to Child Labor Laws.</p> <p>HSA.6 *1. Clearly describe the specific evidence-based systems and structures that will be put in place to mitigate the risk of student drop-out. Ensure that the plan describes remediation and support for students that include various stakeholders (counselors, teachers, family, support organizations, etc.).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress toward diploma—It is important to have an accurate idea of the percentage of students who are not on track to graduate on time to provide appropriate interventions and opportunities</li> <li>• Post-secondary matriculation—assessed through surveys in the fall following graduation. Many low-income students who are accepted to college may not attend. To properly support Helix graduates, the school needs an accurate account of the percentage of students who successfully participate in post-secondary opportunities</li> <li>• Post-secondary persistence—This goal is assessed through annual family surveys. HCS is committed to the long-term success of students. Many low-income, first-generation college students do not persist in college. HCS plans to track post-secondary persistence and develop strategies to support alumni.</li> </ul> |
| Corporate Partnerships Addendum (If Applicable) | The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:  | Not Applicable  |

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|  | <p>CPA.1 *1. Ensure that the MOU/Contract provided by the applicant group clearly outlines the terms of the partnership between the non-profit board and the partner corporation and meets all applicable requirements, based on a preliminary review.</p> <p>Appendix 11 *1. Describe any proposed corporate partnerships, as specified in La. Bulletin 126, Ch 39. Provide a Letter of Intent of the intended partner organization.</p>   |                       |
| <p>Educational Service Provider Addendum (If Applicable)</p> | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>ESPA.1 *1. Ensure that the applicant group identifies which companies/organizations were considered a potential ESP.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group explains how each considered ESP was evaluated and the results of each evaluation.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group provides a clear rationale that explains why the applicant group chooses to partner with an ESP.</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group provides evidence of the ESP's success in serving the schools' intended population, including evidence that demonstrates academic achievement, fiscal responsibility, and organizational effectiveness.</p> <p>ESPA.2 *1. Ensure that the applicant group provides a clear and comprehensive list of decisions made and services rendered in the course of operating a Louisiana charter school in</p> | <p>Not Applicable</p> |



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|  | <p>one calendar year and indicates the decisions or services for which the ESP is responsible.</p> <p>ESPA.3 *1. Ensure that the applicant group provides a detailed oversight plan outlining the mechanisms by which the charter board will hold the ESP accountable to the agreed-upon terms.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the oversight plan indicates that the charter board will evaluate the degree to which the ESP has met contractual obligations on, at a minimum, an annual basis.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the oversight plan includes a clear description of the conditions under which the charter board may terminate the contractual relationship.</p> <p>*ESPA.4 *1. (If applicable) Ensure that the applicant group identifies any current or past litigation that has involved the organization and discusses the outcomes or demands of each identified.</p> <p>*2. (If applicable) Ensure that the applicant group cites instances in which the organization's schools have had their contract terminated, voluntarily closed, or have not been renewed by their authorizer and explains the circumstances surrounding the identified instances.</p> <p>*3. (If applicable) Ensure that the applicant group identifies instances in which the ESP has exited a contract or partnership with a school and explains the circumstances surrounding the identified instances.</p> <p>*4. (If applicable) Ensure that the applicant group identifies non-openings that the organization has experienced and explains the circumstances surrounding the identified instances.</p> |  |
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|   | <p>*5. (If applicable) Ensure that the applicant group provides verifiable evidence that all issues listed have been successfully rectified at the time that the charter application was submitted.</p> <p>Appendix 12 *1. Ensure that there are no material findings in the ESP's most recent audited financial statements.</p> <p>Appendix 13 *1. Ensure that the board maintains independence from the ESP by articulating strong accountability provisions and avoiding opportunities for the ESP to gain leverage over the board.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the ESP cannot control board membership.</p> |                |
| Virtual Operator Addendum (If Applicable) | <p>The charter school proposal should discuss the extent to which the leadership team possesses the ability to:</p> <p>VOA.1 *1. Ensure that the applicant group identifies the Learning Management System (LMS) to be used and outlines the decision-making process employed to select the identified system.</p> <p>VOA.2 *1. Ensure that the applicant group has a clear and feasible plan to acquire and disseminate technology to students to ensure that each student has the technology necessary to participate virtually.</p>   | Not Applicable |

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|  | <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group outlines the steps that will be taken to ensure that students are protected from unsafe and/or inappropriate content.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group provides a logical and feasible plan to minimize the loss of learning time for students in the event of unforeseen technical difficulties (e.g., no access to internet, computer lost/stolen, broken, cell phones and tablets are lost/stolen/broken, etc.)</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group provides a training and technical support plan that will teach students and families to use the LMS (Learning Management System).</p> <p>*5. Ensure that the group provides the technology policy for staff/teachers that complies with R.S.17:3996(21).</p> <p>*6. Ensure that the applicant group details the school's electronic communication policy that complies with the federal Child Internet Protection Act and R.S.17:100.7, including information on school internet safety and filtering practices and policies.</p> <p>VOA.3 *1. Ensure that the applicant group explains how ongoing training and support would be provided to families given their various locations.</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group provides the plan for hosting orientation sessions to enrolled students, their parents, and their instructional coaches on the course delivery model before the beginning of the class.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group describes the plan outlining the nature, frequency, and location of all required and optional in-person meetings and interactions between parents and</p> |  |
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|  | <p>school faculty including but not limited to parent/teacher conferences, open houses, and school community meetings.</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group provides the plan for health screeners.</p> <p>VOA.4 *1. Ensure that the applicant group outlines a clear process to document and monitor student attendance and engagement with the LMS.</p> <p>VOA.5 *1. Ensure that the applicant group presents a logical and feasible plan for administering state assessments for students enrolled in a virtual learning environment that aligns with Louisiana policy.</p> <p>VOA.6 *1. Propose a plan that is logical and feasible to recruit, retain, and train a diversified school leadership and staff to serve within a virtual setting.</p> <p>*2. Outline specific strategies for recruiting EL-certified, special education, and other high-need teacher specialties as required by the proposed model and staffing plan.</p> <p>*3. Describe the process of how the proposed school will service students requiring related services.</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group provides the plan for providing professional development to staff including its delivery method used that is appropriate to the acceptable use and electronic communication policies.</p> <p>*5. Provide a training and technical support plan for students, teachers, facilitators, and instructional coaches.</p> <p>VOA.7 *If the applicant has identified a facility:</p> |  |
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|  | <p>*1. Ensure that the applicant group has identified a facility that will allow the school to serve the intended student population and community as outlined in the charter application. The applicant group provides a thorough description of the current state of the identified facility and provides a logical and feasible plan by which the identified facility will be prepared for use as a public school (associated costs, resources to allocate toward renovations, the availability of facilities in the targeted area suitable to house a public school) and outlines contingency plans should the applicant group fail to secure a facility in the timeline provided.</p> <p>If the applicant group has not identified a facility:</p> <p>*2. Ensure that the applicant group describes the efforts to date to identify and secure a facility that will allow the school to serve the intended student population and community as outlined in the charter application.</p> <p>*3. Ensure that the applicant group provides a description by which a facility will be identified and prepared for use as a public school (timeline, associated costs, resources to allocate toward renovations, the availability of facilities in the targeted area suitable to house a public school) and outlines contingency plans should the applicant group fail to secure a facility in the timeline provided.</p> <p>*4. Ensure that the applicant group identifies the procedures to be followed, and disposition of facilities and equipment should the charter cease.</p> |  |
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|                    | <p>*5. Ensure that the applicant group has a clear and feasible plan to offer at least 20% of in-person instruction to struggling students.</p> <p>VOA.8 *1. Provide a logical and feasible plan to offer transportation, at no cost to students and families, for in-person instruction to struggling students.</p> <p>VOA.9 *1. Outline logical and feasible procedures to protect and recover data in the event of a catastrophic system failure.</p> <p>VOA.10 *1. Outline logical and feasible procedures to limit, identify, and notify proper authorities in the event of a cyber break and/or leak that complies with reporting requirements.</p> |  |
| Holistic Standards | <p>Comprehensiveness: No requested information or essential pieces of the school's plan are left out of the proposal.</p> <p>Support: All claims are backed up with data, citations, or expert testimony.</p> <p>Mission Alignment: All pieces of the plan are working towards the same purpose.</p> <p>Cohesion: All pieces of the plan are integrated.</p>  | <p>Essential pieces of the school's plan are included in the application.</p> <p>Claims made by the applicant are backed with data.</p> <p>All pieces of the plan work together to promote student achievement.</p> <p>All pieces of the plan are integrated cohesively.</p> |