RUTHERFORD COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

DECEMBER 11, 2025
5:30 P.M.

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE/PRAYER

We will be opening the meeting with a brief moment of silence or prayer and the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag. No one is required to participate or be present for any of these and being in this portion of the meeting is completely voluntary.

Work Session: Katie Darby

Board Meeting: Katie Darby introducing Mr. Shelton and his Science students from Thurman Francis to lead the pledge, followed by a presentation.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommended Motion - to approve the agenda as presented.

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (TAB 1)

A. Minutes: Board Meeting Minutes, November 20, 2025

B. Bids:
RFP #25-01 - Mass Communication Platform
RFP #25-02 - Mobile Food Service Trailer (BHS Culinary)
Bid #3838 - Fire Extinguisher Service
Bid #3839 - Fire Alarm Replacement Panel (SCHS)
Bid #3840 - Sound and Lighting Package Upgrade (LHS)

C. Use of Facilities:

FACILITIES USE
12/11/2025

Fees

Plainview Elementary	Top Notch Basketball, practice, gym, 1/6/26 – 7/30/26, $18 per hour

Poplar Hill Elementary	WayTruthLife Church, worship service, gym, 1/4/26 – 1/4/27, $72 per day
Siegel High	Rachel Deml, birthday party, gym, 12/20/25, $290

No Fees

Oakland High	Christian Life Church, church service, classrooms, auditorium & cafeteria, 2/1/26 – 6/30/26, no fees, *In-Kind Agreement
Siegel High	Team Tennessee Wrestling/Middle TN Training Center, practice & tournaments, gym, 12/11/25 – 6/31/26, no fees, *In-Kind Agreement

Note: Facility use prior to 12/11/25 has been granted pending Board action. A certificate of insurance with $2,000,000.00 limits ($1,000,000.00 if approved) is required by each user. Each group must forward any renewals of insurance to the Board on time; otherwise, approval is terminated at the end of the policy period. **All approvals are for no more than a 1-year period.**

D. Non-Faculty Coaches:

NAME	SCHOOL	SPORT
Phillips, Luke	Blackman High	Archery
Facine, Nathan	Central Magnet	Archery
Gourie, Holly	Central Magnet	Softball
Phillips, Julie	Central Magnet	Archery
Richardson, Jeremy	Central Magnet	Archery
Richardson, Stacie	Central Magnet	Archery
Johnson, Jason	LaVergne High	Boys Basketball
Lara, Gabriel	Siegel High	Boys Soccer

E. Salary Supplements and Contract Payments:

Name-Certified	NTE Amt.	School	Funded By	Description
Jeffrey Wilhoit	$1,600.00	Blackman Middle School	School Funds - Boys Soccer	Assistant Coach

Zaira Kime	$700.00	Central Magnet	School Funds - Soccer	Faculty sponsor for team
RaeAnn Boutte	$1,000.00	Oakland Middle School	School Funds - Theater	Costuming & Choreography
RaeAnn Boutte	$23.50 hr.	Oakland Middle School	Outside Use of Facilities	Site Supervisor
Katie Jones	$450.00	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Boys & Girls Basketball	Scorekeeper @ Home Games
Amanda Wallis	$30 per game	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Boys Basketball	Bookkeeper - Varsity & JV combined
Mindy Gannon	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, and Admin Other Exp	Monitoring the Weapon Detection System
Steve Williams	$600.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Assistant Football Coach
Walter Williams	$1,500.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Assistant Football Coach
Doug DeGeer	$1,500.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Football Concession Manager
Lucas Robbins	$600.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Drama	Choreography for Drama Show
John Spurlock	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High School	School Funds - Boys Basketball	Bus Driver
Deven Ferrer	$1,500.00	Stewarts Creek High School	School Funds - Theatre	Faculty Advisor to Student Directors
Ashton Parnell	$2,200.00	Stewarts Creek High School	School Funds - Cheer	Head Coach - Winter Coed Game Day Cheer
Marcus Lyons	$500.00	Whitworth - Buchanan Middle	School Funds - Student Council & Basketball	DJ for Student Council & Announcer for Basketball
Tanya Webb	$600.00	Whitworth - Buchanan Middle	School Funds - Basketball	Timekeeper

Name-Non-Faculty	NTE Amt.	School	Funded By	Description
Samantha Drown	$2,700.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Volleyball	Assistant Coach
Joseph McHenry	$500.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Basketball	Bookkeeper
Name-Classified	**NTE Amt.**	**School**	**Funded By**	**Description**
Jennifer Vinocur	$922.64	Stewarts Creek Middle School	School Funds - Comp Cheer	Asst. Cheer Coach during Nationals
Tracy Fox	$200.00	Stewarts Creek Middle School	School Funds - Basketball	Clock Worker for Basketball Season
LaTasha Francis	$500.00	Stewarts Creek Middle School	School Funds - Basketball	Clock Work

Recommended Motion – to approve the consent agenda as presented.

5. RUTHERFORD PROUD

A. RCS Teach Now and Grow Your Own Teacher Graduates

Rutherford County Schools is proud to celebrate nine paraprofessional apprentices who have earned the opportunity to complete their bachelor's degrees and obtain teacher licensure through partnerships with MTSU and UT Southern's Grow Your Own programs. Over the past two years, these dedicated individuals have transitioned from educational assistants to teachers of record, helping RCS meet critical staffing needs in Elementary and Special Education classrooms.

In addition, Rutherford Teach Now is proud to recognize its fifth graduating cohort of ninety-one teacher-candidates who have successfully completed an 18-month, 141-hour program leading to initial licensure and endorsements in Math, Science, English, Social Studies, World Languages, ESL, and Special Education.

Through their hard work, perseverance, and dedication to students, these educators exemplify the mission of RCS. We are honored to recognize their achievements before the Board of Education and district leaders with a token of appreciation and celebration.

B. Oakland High School 6A Football Championship

Congratulations to the Oakland Patriots for capturing its ninth state title, with its 6A Championship win over Ravenwood on Saturday, Dec. 6. The Patriots have won five state championships in the past six years.

C. Oakland FFA National Winners

Eight students from Oakland High School placed in the top 10 at the recent National FFA Convention and were recognized on stage for their accomplishments. Their teacher and sponsor is Gina Stewart, who will share more information about the students.
National Winner: Oakland FFA, *Emma Goff -Social Systems Division III*
National Runner-Up: Oakland FFA, *Kennedy Lewis & Mary Redmon -Social Systems Division IV*
National Runner-Up: Oakland FFA, *Sarah Wheaton -Plant Systems Division V*
National Runner-Up: Oakland FFA, Christopher Gann -Sheep Production
National 4th Place: Oakland FFA, *Annabeth Cruz -Environmental Systems Division V*
National 5th Place: Oakland FFA, *Madison Rich -Plant Systems Division III*
National 7th Place: Oakland FFA, *Lydia Moore -Food Systems Division III*

RCS Strong Outstanding Staff Awards

Chief Communications Officer James Evans will present the December RCS Strong Outstanding Staff Awards.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS

Wayne Blair and Shelia Bratton are presenting an overview of the Rutherford County Schools Foundation.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

**Public comment requests to address the Board must be provided in writing to the Director of Schools' office no later than noon (12:00 p.m.) on the day of the meeting by completing the Public Comment Form. Speakers will have three (3) minutes to speak.*

8. BOARD ITEMS (TAB 2)

A. Board Recognition of the Rutherford Couty Schools Foundation as an RCS School Support Organization

The Rutherford County Schools Foundation has been created to provide a charitable foundation to support projects and programs benefiting the Rutherford County School System and its students. The Foundation will provide a mechanism to raise significant contributions for projects beyond what is capable of being funded through tax revenues. The Foundation will involve the participation of local businesses and business leaders who will seek charitable contributions. Per RCS Board Policy 2.404, only a group or organization that has a cooperative agreement with the board may use the name or logo of the school district to solicit or raise money, materials, property, securities, services, or other things of value. The Rutherford County Schools Foundation has provided some information requested from the board's written cooperative agreement and can be recognized as an RCS SSO. It is noted that this SSO has NOT received an

IRS determination letter to be recognized as a 501(c)3 non-profit entity that is in compliance with the BOE written cooperative agreement. The IRS letter allows the SSO to operate out of a checking account that is separate from Rutherford County Schools district funds. Until the letter of determination is received, the SSO will utilize the Rutherford County Schools district funds for all its financial activities and be subject to the BOE financial policies and procedures. Also, the approval is contingent upon the organization providing a detailed financial policy, list of officers with titles, training acknowledgement, and annual cooperative agreement, all of which the board attorney has been notified about.

Recommended Motion – to approve the Rutherford County Schools Foundation as a school support organization providing that all requirements are met.

B. Elementary School Rezoning

Recommended Motion – to adopt concept 1 or concept 2 excluding Walter Hill/Wilson areas.

C. Middle School Rezoning

Recommended Motion – to adopt concept 2 as presented and allow current 7th graders to be grandfathered into their current middle school with parent/guardian providing transportation. To qualify for the grandfather option, parents or guardians must submit the RCS form by Friday, January 16, 2026.

D. Proposed Resolution to Repeal PECCA

E. Contract for Property for Potential Transition Academy in North Part of County.
he school system has been looking to potentially add a Transition Academy on the north end of the County. A house and parcel which appears suitable for a Transition Academy has come on the market at 300 Maple Street, Smyrna, and a contract has been negotiated for the purchase of the property. The negotiated purchase price is $750,000. The contract has a 60 day inspection period, and is contingent on approval of funding by the County Commission. The contract terminates unless the Board gives Seller written notice it is electing to proceed with the purchase of the property. The house would need to be inspected during the Inspection Period to confirm its suitability for the proposed use.

Recommended Motion – to approve the execution of the Contract for 300 Maple Street, Smyrna.

9. SAFETY
Mapping Project
This mapping project meets the state law requirement T.C.A. 49-6-805(4)

Quote: $212,290.00 Being paid out of the School Safety Grant.

Collaborative Response Graphics® (CRGs®) are site-specific common operating pictures that

enable better communication during an emergency. CRGs combine accurate floor plans, high-resolution imagery, emergency response pre-planning, and a gridded overlay into one map. Critical Response Group builds CRGs and distributes them to First Responders for use in their pre-existing software applications and provides the necessary training to ensure full implementation.

Recommended Motion – to approve the mapping project request as presented.

10. INSTRUCTION (TAB 3)

A. Orton-Gillingham Training for Title I Schools

Orton-Gillingham Plus and Morphology Plus Training Rutherford County Schools will contract with the Institute for Multi-Sensory Education to continue providing Orton-Gillingham (OG) and Morphology training to classroom teachers, ESL teachers, Special Education Teachers, and Academic Interventionists in 2025-2026. These courses are 5-day highly engaging, interactive, and hands-on training that will provide our educators with a deep understanding of the enhanced OG program. This accredited structured literacy course will equip our teachers with the knowledge, strategies, and tools necessary to effectively implement foundational literacy skills across all instructional tiers. We are planning on 2 cohorts this spring (January and February 2026) at a cost not to exceed $89,112.50. This will be paid through Title I funds for this school year.

Recommended Motion – to utilize Title I funds for OG training in the fall at a cost not to exceed $89, 112.50. This cost is inclusive of training materials, an on-site consultant, and travel costs.

B. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Agreement

In accordance with Board Policy 1.902, an agreement has been drafted between Rutherford County Schools and NOVUS Smart Academy (K-8).

The purpose of this agreement is to articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, and more. The agreement will be effective for 10 years unless it is otherwise amended or revoked per Board Policy.

The exhibits of this agreement include the RCS Performance Framework, a pre-opening checklist detailing the school's responsibilities prior to their first year serving students, and a list of approved waivers from the TN Department of Education. The charter application, which was previously approved by the School Board, can be viewed in its entirety on our website.

Recommended Motion – to approve as presented.

11. LEGAL

Policy Adoption – Second Reading of Two Readings

The policies were recommended on the first reading of November 20, 2025.

Policy Changes

a. Policy 1.703 - School Attendance Zones and Exemptions
Adds requirement of primary domicile to be in Rutherford County at the time of application.

b. Policy 3.206 - Community Use of School Facilities
Adds language to allow deposits to secure school facilities.

c. Policy 4.601 - Reporting Student Progress
Removes driver's license revocation to align with state law.

d. Policy 4.605 - Graduation Requirements
Adds computer science credit starting with the 2024-2025 school year to align with state rules and regulations.

e. Policy 6.204 - Attendance of Non-Resident Students
Adds language to exempt choice schools from early admission.

f. Policy 6.701 - Student Solicitations/Fundraising Activities
Adds language for online fundraising.

Recommended Motion – to adopt the above policies on the second and final reading as presented.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS (TAB 4)
A. Fund 141 Budget Amendment
This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $175,854.00 to account for the FY24-25 charter schools final true-up. This was not a budgeted amount in the FY24-25 budget due to not being able to determine the increase in ADM's and actual revenue and expenditures for that fiscal year. This is potentially a reoccurring budget amendment every fiscal year because it is extremely difficult to be able to determine actual numbers for every charter school when developing the budget. It is required to be amended from fund balance because this is payment to the charters for the previous year's students, revenue, and expenditures.

Recommended Motion - to amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the charter schools final true-up as presented.

B. Fund 141 Budget Amendment
This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $65,000 to fund the deposits of earnest money and appraisals of 5 McFadden properties. This amendment will transfer money by decreasing Fund 141 39000-Unassigned Fund Balance and increasing Board of Education account 72310-715- Land in the amount of $65,000.

Recommended Motion - to amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the McFadden deposits as presented.

C. Fund 141 Budget Amendment

This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $10,000 to fund the deposits of earnest money and appraisal for 300 Maple Street, Smyrna Property. This amendment will transfer money by decreasing Fund 141 39000-Unassigned Fund Balance and increasing Board of Education account 72310-715-Land in the amount of $10,000.

Recommended Motion – to amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the 300 Maple Street Property deposit as presented.

13. ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION (TAB 5)

A. Transportation Contract Termination Bus 220 and 130

Pursuant to Section 8.1 of the Rutherford County Board of Education Bus Contract, the Transportation Department has received an email notification on December 3, 2025, from Brenda Stem, the daughter of James Stem, for bus routes 220 and 130 requesting voluntary termination of the contracts with the Board. Based on previous Board approval, there would be a return of insurance stipend funding for insurance to RCS for both routes. The Board attorney will be requested to notify the estate of this requirement.

Recommended Motion – to approve the voluntary contract termination of Bus 220 and 130 as presented.

B. Central Magnet Bench Request

Dr. John Ash is requesting to install a concrete Caudi bench on the grounds of Central Magnet. The project will support all students and is at the request of the World Languages Department. The project is being donated by the MTSU School of Concrete and Construction Management, at no cost to the Board. Engineering and Construction has reviewed the request and has no objections.

Recommended Motion – to approve the Central Magnet Caudi bench request as presented.

C. Rocky Fork Elementary GaGa Ball Pit Request

Principal Scott Bolden is requesting to install a GaGa ball pit in each of the playground areas of RFE. The project will be at a cost of $9,513.75 and will be at no cost to the Board and will be funded by schoolwide fundraiser funds. Engineering and Construction has reviewed the request and has no objections.

Recommended Motion – to approve the Rocky Fork Elementary GaGa Ball Pits as presented.

14. DIRECTOR'S UPDATE-Thursday

15. TENNESSEE LEGISLATIVE NETWROK (TLN) UPDATE

16. FEDERAL RELATIONS NETWORK (FRN) UPDATE

17. GENERAL DISCUSSION

18. ADJOURNMENT

Rutherford County Schools

2240 Southpark Drive

Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Attendance

Attendance Taken on 11/20/2025 at 5:21 PM

Katie Darby	Present
Claire Maxwell	Present
Frances Rosales	Present
Tammy Sharp	Present
Caleb Tidwell	Present
Butch Vaughn	Present
Stan Vaught	Present

Present: 7, **Absent:** 0

Comments:
Jimmy Sullivan-present

November 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM - Board Meeting Agenda

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE/PRAYER**

Rationale: We will be opening the meeting with a brief moment of silence or prayer and the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag. No one is required to participate or be present for any of these and being in this portion of the meeting is completely voluntary.

Work Session: Frances Rosales to introduce the TSSAA Champions for the 18th time, Blackman High

School COED Varsity Cheer team to lead the pledge.

Board Meeting: Frances Rosales to introduce the LaVergne High Latin Dance Club to lead the pledge. Followed by a two-minute presentation.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
Recommended Motion(s): to approve the agenda as presented. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Caleb Tidwell, motion carried.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**
Recommended Motion(s): to approve the consent agenda as presented. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Katie Darby, motion carried.

A. **Minutes:**
Policy Committee Minutes, October 23, 2025
Board Meeting Minutes, November 6, 2025

B. **Bids:**
Bid #3833 - Technology Equip. and Multimedia Parts
Bid #3834 - LED School Signs (David Youree)
Bid #3835 - Fire Science Class Equipment (Rockvale High)
Bid #3836 - Window Blind Services
RFP - RCS Maintenance would like to purchase a couple of used trucks NTE $40,000.00.

C. **Nepotism:**
Tamara Tovar - Custodian - Riverdale High School
Anne McCormick - PT Cafeteria Monitor - Christiana Elementary School

D. **Use of Facilities:**

USE OF FACILITIES

FEES	**11/20/2025**
Barfield Elementary	Savannah Ridge Homeowners Assoc. meeting, cafeteria, 1/12/26, $54
Blackman Middle	Victory Drumline, rehearsal, band room, 11/21/25 - 4/26/26, $15 per day
Oakland High	JAC Investment LLC, flag football tournament, stadium, 11/15/25 - 11/16/25, $1320, **retro review

Rock Springs Elementary	Stones River Futbol Club, practice, sports field, 12/1/25 - 2/26/26, $540
Siegel High	Fellowship Bible Church, service, classrooms & auditorium, 1/4/26 - 12/27/26, $345 per day
Siegel High	Kings Hammer, soccer games, stadium, 11/21/25 - 5/31/26, $150 per game

NO FEES

Barfield Elementary	The Center for Martial Arts Excellence, character education, music room, 1/20/26 - 1/22/26, no fees, *In-Kind Agreement
Riverdale High	Middle Tennessee Childrenâ€™s Theatre, rehearsal, choir room, 11/21/25 - 3/19/26, no fees, *In-Kind Agreement
Rock Springs Elementary	Tennessee Hustle Basketball, practice, gym, 3/8/26 - 6/27/26, no fees, *In-Kind Agreement
Rocky Fork Middle	Smyrna Junior Basketball League, practice, gym, 11/21/25 - 3/13/26, no fees
Siegel High	Girl Scout Troop #3546, meetings, classroom or library, 12/9/25 - 5/10/26, no fees

Note: Facility use prior to 11/20/25 has been granted pending Board action. A certificate of insurance with $2,000,000.00 limits ($1,000,000.00 if approved) is required by each user. Each group must forward any renewals of insurance to the Board on time; otherwise, approval is terminated at the end of the policy period. **All approvals are for no more than a 1-year period.**

E. **Non-Faculty Volunteer Coaches:**

NAME	SCHOOL	ACTIVITY
Trauscht, Riley	Smyrna Middle School	Band
Huff, Justin	Blackman High	JROTC
Thompson, Seth	Blackman High	Girls Wrestling

Weber, Scott	Blackman High	Archery
Wright, Jaclyn	Blackman High	Track
Speight, Jill	Central Magnet	Tennis
Goodwin, Delvon	LaVergne High	Boys Basketball
Johnson, Jerell	LaVergne High	Wrestling
Lynch II, Eddie	LaVergne High	Boys Basketball
Segree, Baylor	LaVergne High	Track
Newman, Destiny	Rockvale High	Girls Basketball
Johnson, Mike	Rockvale Middle	Archery
Granger, Jennifer	Rockvale Middle/Elementary	Archery
Simmonds, David	Rockvale Middle/Elementary	Archery
Davis, Lexi	Siegel High	Cheer
Blanchard, Brooklyn	Smyrna High	Girls Basketball
Johnson, Jaylen	Smyrna High	Boys Basketball
Smith, Sam	Smyrna High	Swimming
Arrington, Steven	Stewarts Creek High	Tennis
Ross, Terry	Stewarts Creek High	Tennis
Taylor, Derrek	Stewarts Creek High	Archery
Dohuky, Omar	Stewarts Creek Middle	Wrestling

F. **Salary Supplements and Contract Payments:**

Name-Certified	NTE Amt.	School	Funded By	Description
Jacob Breed	$1,500.00	Blackman High School	School Funds - Social Meida	Managing Social Media Platforms
Juliet Oncale	$1,800.00	Blackman High School	School Funds - Friday School Adm	Supervise Friday School Attendees
Jonathan Robert Wright	$1,500.00	Blackman High School	School Funds - Jazz Band	Before and After School Instruction
Brenda Monson	$1,500.00	Blackman High School	School Funds - Jazz Band	Before and After School Instruction
Craig Reavis	$1,400.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Girls & Boys Basketball	Score clock for Middle School & Bookkeeping for High School Games
Tiffany Stanley	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
Josh Burns	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings

Elesha Winebrenner	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
Erica Griggs	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
David Keylon	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
Erica Fann	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
Jay Windham	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings
Leland Punke	$500.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings- Sub
Carolyn Burns	$500.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Safety	Manage weapon detection system in the mornings - Sub
Brandon Bassham	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Darren Shanks	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Richard Bolden	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Alan Pepper	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Todd Williamson	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Christopher Lowry	$2,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Band	Half time show arrangement
Alexander Sears	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Band	Half time show arrangement
Joseph Wilson	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
Isaac Haley	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
John McClaran	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
Chris Lynch	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games

Caleb Keller	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
Gordon Mac Jones	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
David Bo Tollett	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball MS & HS	Officiate Basketball Games
James Shields	$1225.00 ($175 per game)	Lavergne High School	School Funds - Football	Announcer
Samantha Morton	$1,000.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Carroll Keener	$800.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Brandon Nolen	$800.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Jesse Messick	$800.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Jessica Holt	$500.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Kenneth Walker	$400.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Micah Baldree	$400.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Nathan Walls	$400.00	Oakland High School	School Funds - Football	Supervision at Football Games
Travarus Holloway	$2,500.00	Oakland Middle School	School Funds - Football	Off Season Field Maintenance, Summer Workouts, & 7V7 Officiating
Chase Smith	$320.00 ($160 each team)	Oakland Middle School	School Funds - Girls & Boys Basketball	Statistician for Home Games
Austin Sisco	$1,500.00	Riverdale High School	School Funds - Football	Asst. Coach
Joshua Pelchat	$2,000.00	Riverdale High School	School Funds - Football	Asst. Coach
Nathanael Paris	$2,000.00	Riverdale High School	School Funds - Football	Asst. Coach
Christopher Gray	$500.00	Rocksprings Middle School	School Funds - Boys & Girls Basketball	Scoreboard/Announcer
Kevin Jones	$1,200.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Band	Bus Driver

Kevin Jones	$700.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Girls Basketball & Cheer	Bus Driver
Kevin Jones	$850.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Swim	Bus Driver
Cuyler Adams	$700.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Cross Country	Assistant Coach
Rebecca Lowry	$825.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Band	Marching Band Choreography & Apparel Printing
Kevin Jones	$500.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Boys Basketball	Bus Driver
James Counce	$5,000.00	Rockvale High School	School Funds - Football	Coach
Shelly Petty	$1,000.00	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Football/Competition Cheer	Assistant Coach
Sarah Chambers	$500.00	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Theater	Frozen Jr. Director
Michele Levy	$1,500.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Swim	Assistant Coach
Sydney Moore	$3,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Volleyball	Assistant Coach
Travis Childers	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Enrique Cing	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Misty Dobbs	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Tommy Entrekin	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Dallas Erdman	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Nardine Eryan	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school

Henry Fields	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Shikera Johnson	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Nathaniel Lillard	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Gregory Myers	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
William Jared Norwood	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Lilian Presson	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Craig Reavis	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Matthew Turnbow	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Weapons Detection System - Football, Basketball, & during school
Bailey Griffith	$2,000.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Volleyball	Assistant Volleyball Coach
Gabriel Villarreal	$500.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Baseball	Weight Conditioning
Denise Hiott	$300.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
Carl Syler	$375.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
Christy Burns	$75.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
Cherlyn Carlisle	$300.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
William Carlisle	$300.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
Kelly Wester	$75.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Weapon Detection System Monitor
Lia Beachboard	$375.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Ticket Booth Worker

Kimberly Clemons	$150.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Ticket Booth Worker
Robyn Evans	$75.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Ticket Booth Worker
Angeline Gaddy	$375.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Ticket Booth Worker
Sandy Stutts	$150.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Ticket Booth Worker
William Hawkins, Jr.	$1,500.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Girls & Boys Basketball	Concessions Management
Jennifer Patterson	$4,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Softball	Summer mowing, field work, & coaching supplement
Donna Pearson	$2,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Basketball Cheer	Coaching
Carmen Trujillo	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Michael Strickland	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Abbey Aguero	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Jamie Hart	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Laura Roland	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Richard Beard	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Karla White	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Kurt Bissinger	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Stephanie Coltharp	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Chelsa Arrington	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Jesse Maust	$1,000.00	Stewarts Creek High	School Funds - Admin Other Exp	Metal Detector - Morning Worker
Shannon Marlin	$60 per home basketball game	Thurman Francis Arts Academy	School Funds - Basketball	Sell tickets at all TFAA Home basketball games
Brandi Breneman	$60 per home	Thurman Francis Arts Academy	School Funds - Basketball	Keep score at all TFAA home basketball games

	basketball game			
Name-non-faculty	**NTE Amt.**	**School**	**Funded By**	**Description**
Micah McClellan	$1,600.00	Blackman Middle School	School Funds - Baseball	Assistant Coach
Macari Harrison	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - Girls Basketball	Bookkeeping
Annabelle Goodman	$1,000.00	Central Magnet School	School Funds - HS Cheer	Help coach cheer at games, practices, and competition
Brittany Randolph	$600.00	Christiana Elementary School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Custodial
Jason Greene	$500.00	Christiana Middle School	School Funds - Baseball	Assistant Coach
Owen McClaran	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Adrian Sevieri	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Kevin Snell	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Bobby Leathers	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Ann Marie Oliver	$800.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Working Jr. Pro Basketball Games
Bethany Jackson	$800.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Working Jr. Pro Basketball Games
Ben Wood	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Cooper Duke	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Derek Lee	$1,000.00	Eagleville School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Officiate JV Basketball Games
Samuel Gorden	$3,000.00	Oakland Middle School	School Funds - Basketball	Assistant Coach
Helen Barnes	$640 ($320 each team)	Oakland Middle School	School Funds - Girls & Boys Basketball	Season Clock Keeper

Reagan Tarin	$500.00	Plainview Elementary School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Scorekeeping
Wyatt Colwell	$500.00	Plainview Elementary School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Scorekeeping
Aaron "Brooks" Colwell	$500.00	Plainview Elementary School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Scorekeeping
Jaylee West	$500.00	Plainview Elementary School	School Funds - Jr Pro Basketball	Scorekeeping
Ashleigh Chambers	$1,400.00	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Drama/Theater	Dance Choreography & Little Mermaid, Jr. Choreography
Destiny Newman	$2,000.00	Rockvale Middle School	School Funds - Basketball	Assistant Coach
Jason Tigg	$2,500.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Coaching
Tevin Geter	$3,000.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Coaching
Joshua Meglis	$3,000.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Coaching
Trace Petrilli	$2,000.00	Smyrna High School	School Funds - Football	Coaching
Riley Trauseht	$25 per lesson	Smyrna Middle School	School Funds - Band	Woodwind & Clarinet
Isaac Ferrell	$8,500.00	Stewarts Creek High School	Stewarts Creek High School Music Boosters	Horn Lessons and Coaching
William Moore	$9,600.00	Stewarts Creek High School	Stewarts Creek High School Music Boosters	Percussion Lessons
Name-Classified	**NTE Amt.**	**School**	**Funded By**	**Description**
Jose Lopez	Classified Overtime Pay	Blackman Elementary School	Outside Use of Facilities	Custodial Duties
Taylor Ada Leslie	Classified Overtime Pay	John Coleman Elementary	Outside Use of Facilities	Custodial Duties

Tammy Wilson	$2,000.00	Siegel High School	School Funds - Football, Basketball, & Admin Other Expense	Monitoring the Weapon Detection System

G. **Weapons Detection Stipends (1st Semester):**
$500 per semester

Blackman Elementary School	1. Beth Ann Miller	Rockvale Elementary School	1. Christina Anderson
	2. Jacqueline Bartoszek		2. Alicia Byrd
Blackman High School	1. Fredis Guevara		3. Kristi DeGraw
	2. Owen Callais		4. Christy Steagall
	3. Thomas Capouch		5. Shields Templeton
	4. Greg Jones	Rockvale High School	1. Tiffany Johnson
	5. LaTonya Jones		2. James Stone
	6. Cruz Decker		3. Cortnei Lewis
	7. Daniel Parkhurst		4. Shea Diehl
	8. Mary Royal		5. Monica Cunningham
	9. Ronnie Bray		6. Patricia Campbell
	10. Sean Holt		7. Brett Johnson
Blackman Middle School	1. Kathryn Urell		8. Jonathan Dill
	2. Marsha Smith		9. Maegan Nutt
	3. Maranda Allen		10. David Matikke
	4. Sarah Parker	Rockvale Middle School	1. Kristina Nelson
	5. Stefanie Prater		2. Shelly Petty
	6. Tania Vargas	Rocky Fork Elementary School	1. Jessica Woodruff
	7. Lucrecia Gregg		2. Kimberly Johnson
	8. Shawn Lee		3. Melissa Austin
Brown's Chapel Elementary School	1. Mackenzie Loyd	Rocky Fork Middle School	1. Rachel Newcomb
	2. Nichole Duvall-Noelle		2. Mary Eller
	3. Amy Jo Hamrick		3. Chelsea Spicer

Buchanan Elementary School	1. Natasha Bryant		4. Carrie Jerkins
	2. Thomas Wipperman		5. Brittney Hartman
Cedar Grove Elementary	1. Maritza Rodriguez		6. Julius Fain
	2. Lesley Hiton	Roy Waldron School	1. Marlene Moniz
	3. Michelle Carlson		2. Sherry Jones
	4. Stephanie Agren	Siegel High School	1. Travis Childers
Central Magnet School	1. Joshua Burns		2. Misty Dobbs
	2. Jay Windham		3. Dallas Erdman
	3. Erica Griggs		4. Shikera Johnson
	4. David Keylon		5. Nathaniel Lillard Jr.
	5. Tiffany Stanley		6. Scott Myers
	6. Elesha Winebrenner		7. William Norwood
	7. Eric Fann		8. Lilian Presson
	8. Leland Punke		9. Craig Reavis
	9. Carolyn Burns		10. Tammy Wilson
Christiana Middle School	1. Michael Overstreet	Siegel Middle School	1. Jami Ervin
	2. Tonya Newman		2. Jason Gray
	3. Sean Kirkpatrick		3. Katie Hinkelmann
	4. Inez Giannola		4. Whitman Czajkowski
	5. Cory Bransford		5. Connie Allen
	6. Allison Ballance		6. James Kelley
Eagleville School	1. Matthew Conrad		7. Martaveon Dockery
	2. Karyl Paul		8. Tonya Turner
	3. Ann Leslie Trail	Simon Springs Community School	1. Sarah Larose
Holloway High School	1. Alston Denton		2. Krista Hancock-Osborne
	2. Johnna Paraiso	Smyrna Elementary School	1. Sandra Simpson
HP Campus School	1. Jane Phelps		2. Karla Charlemagne

John Colemon Elementary School	1. Kaitlin Elmore		3. Ida McCroskey
	2. Robert Pickert	Smyrna High School	1. Casey Adams
Lascassas Elementary School	1. April Holland		2. Charles Robinson
	2. Jennifer Morrill		3. Christy Burns
	3. Angel Hollandsworth		4. Kelly Wester
LaVergne High School	1. Krista Toennies		5. Hailey O'Connor
	2. Angela Briggs		6. Carmen Bouldin
	3. Tabitha Torri		7. Cher Carlisle
	4. Travis Johnson		8. Chelsea Moore
	5. Ashlie Hutchins		9. Rebecca Walther
	6. Justin Smith		10. Denise Hiott
	7. Melody Templeton	Smyrna Middle School	1. Hunter Moseley
	8. Cynthia Barnhill		2. Brittany Bumbalough
	9. Lynette Berger		3. Hannah Garrett
	10. Joy Patton		4. Mandy Smith
LaVergne Lake Elementary School	1. Brian Carlson		5. Tikareian McNeal
	2. Stacey Parnell		6. Ashley Jackson-Radle
	3. Brande Mitchell	Smyrna Primary School	1. Amy Gardner
LaVergne Middle School	1. LaQualla Tatum		2. Jana Gibson
	2. Joshua Jamerson	Smyrna West Alternative School	1. Melissa Kline
McFadden School of Excellence	1. Shawn Baughman		2. Maranda Nave
Oakland High School	1. Trevor Beverly	Stewarts Creek Elementary School	1. Angela Morris
	2. Micah Baldree		2. Angela Bowling
	3. Mary Dianne Howard		3.Natalie Barnett
	4. Cameron Lynch		4. Rebecca Gromer
	5. Viji Meganath	Stewarts Creek High School	1. Carmen Trujillo
	6. Matthew Koostra		2. Michael Strickland

	7. Marcus McDonald		3. Abbey Aguero
	8. Nancy Baxley		4. Jamie Hart
	9. Anthony Rutland		5. Laura Roland
	10. Kyle Lovett		6. Richard Beard
Oakland Middle School	1. Blake Higgs		7. Karla White
	2. Laura Swan		8. Kurt Bissinger
	3. Ashley Young		9. Stephanie Coltharp
	4. Laurie Offutt		10. Chelsea Arrington
	5. Catherine Auge		11. Jesse Maust
	6. Charlee Baker	Stewarts Creek Middle School	1. LaTasha Francis
	7. Buffy Davenport		2. Tammy Rockett
	8. John Huskey		3. Sarah Campbell
Plainview Elementary School	1. Joshua Thourenin		4. Allen Kessinger
	2. Jennifer Young		5. Brandon Moya
	3. Elizabeth Gamber		6. Tracy Fox
	4. Marissa Faulk	Stewartsboro Elementary School	1. Daniel Lee Brunner
Poplar Hill Elementary School	1. Reilly Hood		2. Melody Williams
	2. Joy Carlin	Thurman Francis Arts Academy	1. Dulcie Heim
	3. Kevin Lauer		2. Brandi Breneman
	4. Misty Waddell		3. Rosanna Heard
Riverdale High School	1. Kimberly Cerchiaro		4. Brent Shelton
	2. Brad Deas		5. Brenda Hardy
	3. Katherine Edwards	Walter Hill Elementary School	1. Stanley Joslin
	4. Roshanda Fleming		2. Gina McClanahan
	5. Byrena Kirkham	Whitworth-Buchanan Middle School	1. Darla Massey
	6. Michelle Smith		2. Michael Gilliland
	7. Sarah Medley		3. David Bonilla

	8. Brian Mileusnich		4. Hannah Garrard
	9. Joe Potillor		5. Christopher Robinson
	10. Laquisha Swader		6. Melissa Barrett
Rock Springs Elementary School	1. William Brock	Wilson Elementary School	1. Stevie Trotter
	2. Lacey Campbell		2. Deanna Porter
	3. Craig Lawton		3. Paul Wrather
	4. Courtney Maresca		4. Ashleigh Cathcart
	5. Bergen Pendleton		
	6. Abeer Saleh		
Rock Springs Middle School	1. Carson Rudd		
	2. Valerie Alba		
	3. Frederick Crismon		
	4. Elizabeth Westenberger		
	5. Allana Pierce		
	6. Brianna Harrell		
	7. Bailey Strand		
	8. Kayla Crutcher		

H. **Request for Stipends for Spring 2026 ACT Bootcamp**
$50 per hour/$1,200 per school

SCHOOL	NAME	SCHOOL	NAME
Blackman High	Scott Baker	**Riverdale High**	Kimberly Cerchairo
	Shelley DeLaCruz		Brittany Rhinehart
	Leah Jaramillo		Nicole Rodriguez
Central Magnet	Brendan Eldridge	**Rockvale High**	Cortnei Lewis
	Ellaina Taylor		Hannah Belcher
	Jonathan Kinney		Erin Presley
Eagleville School	Nancy Warden	**RC Virtual School**	Karen Dodd
	Bonnie Wright		Amy Penny
	Anna Hendrixson		Robin Bollman

Holloway High	Jill Ethridge	**Siegel High**	Matt Marlatt
	Jennifer Williams		Kyle Sikorski
	Kayla Wainwright		Miller Raybon
LaVergne High	Heaven Doh	**Smyrna High**	Kelly Wester
	Kayla Costa		Christine McGinnis
	Christian James		Sandra Stutts
Oakland High	Samantha Morton	**Stewarts Creek High**	Shaun Smith
	Eric Boston		Michael Strickland
	Nathan Walls		Sara Simms

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS***
Lindsey Hebden concerns with Elementary re-zoning.
Julie Bodine asking that the Board consider grandfathering for 8th graders when re-zoning.
Corinna Maldonado to discuss re-zoning and the effects of students moving from Siegel to Oakland Middle School.
SaraJade Burda opposes re-zoning Stewarts Creek Elementary students to Brown's Chapel Elementary.
Laura Montanez Miller opposes re-zoning Stewarts Creek Elementary students to Brown's Chapel Elementary.

**Public comment requests to address the Board must be provided in writing to the Director of Schools' office no later than noon (12:00 p.m.) on the day of the meeting by completing the Public Comment Form. Speakers will have three (3) minutes to speak.*

6. **RUTHERFORD PROUD**
Work Session: Dr. Wally Luckeydoo at Smyrna High School, has been selected as the 2025 John Simi Teacher of the Year Award by the Tennessee Educational Technology Association.

Board Meeting: Eagleville Volleyball - State Championship
The Eagleville Volleyball team recently won its first state championship and will be recognized by the athletic department.

Work Session: Shanna Groom, School Nursing Coordinator, spoke at the Board's request about a resolution, put forth by Tammy Sharp, regarding adequate funding for school nurses. This resolution was passed by the TSBA delegate assembly last week.

Work Session: The Eagleville Volleyball Team ended their season with a record of 43-5. On October 24 they won their first state title.

Board Meeting: The Stones River Brigade Cadet Leadership Team each shared an overview of RCS JROTC 2025-206 accomplishments and highlights.
Commander Cadet: Colonel Kathryn Wolvington
Executive Officer: Cadet Mackenzie McCoy
Command Sergeant Major: Cadet Lydia Knight

A. **RCS Strong Outstanding Staff Awards**
Chief Communications Officer James Evans will present the October RCS Strong Outstanding Staff Awards.

Administrator: Principal Justin Smith, Blackman High School
Teacher: Candace Thomspon, Oakland High School
Central Office: Emily Marshall, CTE
Support Staff: Ashley Fitzgerald, Walter Hill Elementary
Transportation: Bus Driver Chai Dackerman

7. **GUEST SPEAKERS**
Work Session: Rob Schwarz, presentation of Middle School Zoning Data

Board Meeting: Overview presentation about RCS JROTC SY25-26
Stones River Brigade Cadet Leadership Team:
Commander: Cadet Colonel Kathryn Wolvington
Executive Officer: Cadet Mackenzie McCoy
Command Sergeant Major: Cadet Lydia Knight

Rob Schwarz joined us via zoom on November 20, 2025, to give an overview of updated maps on Elementary re-zoning options based on discussions with the Board during the Work Session on Tuesday. Mrs. Darby requested RSP to provide a chart keeping zoning as it is currently for Stewarts Creek Elementary but capping it for in-coming students. The data for this school has grown dramatically since we began in 2022, based on growth per housing unit and number of school-aged children per unit. During this time, the Brown's Chapel zone has not experienced the same type of growth. Mr. Tidwell asked RSP if most new developments are going up in the north or south ends of the Stewarts Creek zone. RSP responded that there is an equal amount of growth in both areas. Mrs. Rosales and Mr. Vaughn urged parents as well as the Board to meet with County and City leaders to encourage stopping the overgrowth in our County.

8. **HUMAN RESOURCES**
Collaborative Conferencing Committee
Pursuant to Section 49-5-605, the Board of Education is required to appoint management personnel to serve on a committee following a majority vote in favor of collaborative conferencing.

Andrea Anthony
Kelly Chastain
Brian Sears
Brian Lewis
Suszane Freeze
Letoni Murry
Larry Creasy

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the Board of Education representatives for the collaborative conferencing committee as presented. This motion, made by Tammy Sharp and seconded by Butch Vaughn, opposed by Caleb Tidwell, motion carried..

9. **INSTRUCTION**

Siegel High School is requesting authorization to begin the process with Cambridge International: Cambridge is a comprehensive PreK-12 academic program that includes world-class curriculum, assessment, teacher resources, PD and more and culminates in college credit at the advanced level. Cambridge offers over 50 courses at the high school level in a wide range of subjects (CTE, humanities, languages, STEAM) that are taught by Siegel teachers. The Cambridge Pathway prepares students for both college and careers through skills, content, and 21st century learning. Cambridge currently partners with 10,000 schools in 160 countries and has strong higher ed credit policies.

For the state of TN, Cambridge can help to make a positive impact on state and federal graduation measures; Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSO)

Cambridge AS/A Levels qualify for the following:

- EPSO status in the *TN Ready Graduate*
- TN Report Card CCR Indicator
- TISA Outcomes Funding models

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve Siegel High School moving forward with the application and authorization process with Cambridge International. This motion, made by Katie Darby and seconded by Tammy Sharp, motion carried..

A. **TISA Accountability Report Approval**
School districts in Tennessee are required to present their Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) accountability report for public review and comment and board approval prior to being submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). The TISA Accountability Report will be reviewed annually to determine whether the school district is taking proper steps to achieve their stated goals. The report will be submitted annually to the TDOE in November.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the TISA Accountability Report as presented for the 2025-2026 school year for Rutherford County Schools. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Caleb Tidwell, motion carried.

10. **LEGAL**

I. Policy Adoption - First Reading of Two Readings

The policies below are recommended on the first reading. These policies will be brought at the next scheduled board meeting for a second and final reading.

Policy Changes
a. Policy 1.703 - School Attendance Zones and Exemptions
Adds requirement of primary domicile to be in Rutherford County at the time of application.

b. Policy 3.206 - Community Use of School Facilities
Adds language to allow deposits to secure school facilities.

c. Policy 4.601 - Reporting Student Progress
Removes driver's license revocation to align with state law.

d. Policy 4.605 - Graduation Requirements
Adds computer science credit starting with the 2024-2025 school year to align with state rules and regulations.

e. Policy 6.204 - Attendance of Non-Resident Students
Adds language to exempt choice schools from early admission.

f. Policy 6.701 - Student Solicitations/Fundraising Activities
Adds language for online fundraising.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to adopt above policies on the first of two readings presented. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Stan Vaught, motion carried.

II. Disciplinary Hearing Appeal - 25-1101

The Board has been requested to review a decision of the Director of Schools. The Disciplinary Hearing Authority (DHA) upheld the school's decision to zero tolerance of a student from Eagleville School. The Director of Schools modified the offense to a remandment. Based on a review of the record of the DHA and of the Director of Schools, the Board may:
A. Affirm the decision of the Director of Schools;
B. Overturn the decision of the Director of Schools; or
C. Grant a hearing before the Board.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to affirm the decision of the Director of Schools. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Stan Vaught, motion carried.

Mrs. Darby read a statement from the parents who appealed to the Board, stating they were sorry they could not be at the meeting in person, but asked for an appeal hearing before the Board.

III Transfer Student Under Discipline (1)
The Board has been requested to admit a transfer student from another school system under discipline. The student was remanded for possession of THC. According to Policy 6.318, the Board may deny admissions of any student (except those in state custody) when a student transfers from another school system while under suspension or expulsion.

Director of Schools' Recommendation: Admit and place into alternative school.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to admit the admission of this Transfer Student Under Discipline as presented. This motion, made by Stan Vaught and seconded by Tammy Sharp, motion carried.

IV. Transfer Student Under Discipline (2)

The Board has been requested to admit a transfer student from another school system under discipline. The student was placed at an alternative learning center for a student assault. According to

Policy 6.318, the Board may deny admissions of any student (except those in state custody) when a student transfers from another school system while under suspension or expulsion.

Director of Schools' Recommendation: Deny admission.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to deny the admission of this Transfer Student Under Discipline as presented. This motion, made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Stan Vaught, motion carried.

11. **ENGINEERING AND CONSTUCTION**

I. MWSD request for land purchase at Siegel High:
As part of the Thompson Lane TDOT road widening project, MWSD will be required to make waterline adjustments. They have provided drawings and the appropriate land purchase documents for approval. The value offered is $4,746.65 for both permanent and temporary easements. Engineering and Construction has reviewed the request and has no objection.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the MWSD easement offer as presented. This motion, made by Stan Vaught and seconded by Butch Vaughn , motion carried.

II. Oakland High School Change Order #1: Engineering and Construction with input from Principal John Marshall, requests to utilize $500,000.00 of available site construction funds to address additional renovation of areas inside the existing building.

This work will include additional flooring, ceiling replacement, additional fire alarm replacement and paint. The work has been reviewed by GMC Architecture and the cost approved. This is not a request for additional funds, but the reallocation of unused site funds for the project. Engineering and Construction has reviewed the request and has no objections.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the Change Order #1 as presented. This motion, made by Stan Vaught and seconded by Caleb Tidwell, motion carried.

III. Town of Smyrna Cedar Stone Sewer Realignment Request:
The town of Smyrna has undertaken an extension of the sewer system along Morton Road. In doing so, the City determined a portion of the sewer on RCS property is under the wing walls of the bridge, and they are requesting relocation to this section while making the adjustments for this project. This adjustment will not affect the roadways or service to RCS but will require an updated easement agreement. Engineering and Construction has reviewed the request and has no objections.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the Town of Smyrna sewer request as presented. This motion, made by Stan Vaught and seconded by Tammy Sharp, motion carried.

IV. Transportation Contract termination Bus 96:
Pursuant to Section 8.1 of the Rutherford County Board of Education Bus Contract, the Transportation Department has received a letter dated November 4,2025, from Angela Gilley, contractor for bus 96, requesting voluntary termination of her contract with the Board. She has stated her termination date as December 1, 2025. Based on previous Board approval, there would be a

return of insurance stipend funding for insurance to RCS of $2,399.76.

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the voluntary contract termination of Bus 96 as presented. This motion, made by Tammy Sharp} and seconded by Butch Vaughn , motion carried.

V. Transportation Contract termination Bus 201**:**
Pursuant to Section 8.1 of the Rutherford County Board of Education Bus Contract, the Transportation Department has received a letter dated September 22, 2025, from Christy Taylor, contractor for bus 201, requesting voluntary termination of her contract with the Board. She has stated her termination date as November 30, 2025. The last day to drive is November 21, 2025. Based on previous Board approval, there would be a return of insurance stipend funding for insurance to RCS of $2,421.98

Recommended Motion(s): Motion to approve the voluntary contract termination of Bus 201 as presented. This motion, made by Caleb Tidwell and seconded by Katie Darby, motion carried.

VI. Transportation Route Awarding:
On September 24th, the Transportation Department emailed all contractors with the new Route awarding procedure and application for existing contractors. The deadline for applications was October 14th and there were 11 applicants. We have received calls from a few contractors that either did not read the information, or the information went into their junk mail, or they did not understand that the Board initiated a new procedure for awarding routes per the new procedure 3.4 pages 3-5. We are prepared to begin the new awarding process but want the Board to be aware of the situation, prior to receiving calls.

Work Session: Trey Lee asked the Board to make a decision on Thursday on how Transportation should proceed.

Board Meeting: Butch Vaughn said this motion is unfair to the eleven contractors who responded the first time. Everyone has already been given two chances to respond.

Motion to give Trey Lee and Transportation the ability to open the route awarding system back up with the deadline of December 1 to allow contractors one more time to apply. Motion made by Caleb Tidwell and seconded by Claire Maxwell, opposed by Butch Vaughn, motion carried. Roll call vote.

12. **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**
The CTE Mobile Labs have been a big hit in the district.
Additional signage to advertise re-zoning have made a big impact by placing these at schools that will be affected.
Information from parent survey is being compiled and will soon be shared with the Board.

13. **CO POTENTIAL CLOSING**
Wednesday, November 26, 2025
Mrs. Maxwell recommended closing the Central Office on Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025, as a paid holiday for Central Office 12-month employees and school-based custodians. The district is open on

Veterans Day with programs honoring our Vets at several schools and this is a holiday where County offices are closed.

Motion to approve the recommendation to close Central Office on Wednesday Nov. 26, 2025, as presented. Motion made by Butch Vaughn and seconded by Frances Rosales, motion carried.

14. **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**
Rutherford County Schools' lunch debt is significantly lower than last year at this time.

Transportation sent out two letters on route descriptions that have not been turned in in per their contract. Mr. Reed read that portion of the contract to the Board.

Butch Vaughn made a motion and seconded by Caleb Tidwell that we enforce the contract and withhold their pay per the contract. Amended Motion made by Frances Rosales and seconded by Stan Vaught, the motion to begin withholding their pay immediately beginning in November and continuing until their routes are turned in.

The amended motion carried.
Mr. Tidwell seconded the original motion carried.

15. **GENERAL DISCUSSION**
Mrs. Rosales made a recommendation to the Board that if we begin looking at building a new school, then start discussing zoning or potential changes to zoning lines. Delay the vote on zoning until the school is about to open.
Mrs. Rosales has received questions from parents asking if the new middle school opening will offer sports and activities in line with our other schools and if those being re-zoned have the opportunity to try out. TSSAA requires tryouts for all new students, even those who are re-zoned. The new MS will have all sports and clubs just like the other MS.
BHS football has a game against Maryville on Friday night at home.
Mr. Tidwell clarified that he doesn't support collaborative conferencing. It is required by the state, and he has nothing against the individuals.
Mr. Vaughn brought up FFA National representation across the district in Indianapolis.
Ms. Sharp was at the DECA competition and judged Nashville and Davidson County students and announced news to come on JazzFest.
Mrs. Darby discussed RSP and re-zoning and the original goals of the Board. We tried to keep feeder schools. She doesn't think re-zoning is what is best for children. Asked people to reach out with new ideas similar to what she asked for by capping Stewarts Creek Elementary. She asked that we ask the County Commission for what we need not what we think will pass.
Mrs. Maxwell agreed with the Board advocating for what we need as a District.
Dr. Sullivan stated that building utilization was what the Board voted as the top priority in May 2023 and it that needs to change that they give RSP new guidance.
We have the highest number of reward schools in Rutherford County Schools history.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**
Discussion: Mrs. Maxwell gaveled out at 7:42 pm.

Approval of Agenda Minutes

_____ _____

Claire Maxwell, RCS BOE Chairman Date

_____ _____

Dr. James Sullivan, RCS Director of Schools Date

Rutherford County School Board Meetings and exact conversations are recorded and may be found at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7CB325821E536E8D. Board Meeting minutes are provided as a supplement to the recording.

RFP #25-01 - Mass Communication Platform

Vendors	Mass Communication Platform
Appetegy	**$278,250.00 with $26,000 one time cost**
Finalsite	$ 188,900.00
ParentSquare	$218,890 plus $24,950 for onboarding

CATEGORY	POSSIBLE POINTS	Apptegy	Bloomz, Inc	ClassDojo, Inc.	Cultivation Network	Edlio	Finalsite	ParentSquare	PowerSchool	Regroup Mass Notifications
Compliance	Pass/Fail	**Pass**	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
Company Qualifications	40	**32.69**					28.18	23.13		
Experience with School Districts	20	**12.75**					10.58	8.87		
Services align with district needs	20	**12.73**					10.6	7.75		
Total fee and relevant issues	20	**9.85**					11.78	8.36		
Point Sub-Total:	**100**	**68.02**					61.14	48.11		

Bid was posted online at BidNet (Sovara)

Recommend: Motion to award to Appetegy for overall lowest and best bid.

To be funded through GP funds

12/11/25

apptegy

Date: Nov 24, 2025

Order Form

Expires: Jan 1, 2026

Client Name: Rutherford County Schools, TN ("Client")
Attn: James Evans
Address:
2240 Southpark Blvd
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

Order Summary

Client Start Date: Jul 1, 2026 End Date: Jun 30, 2030 Contract Term: 48 months	Payment Terms: Net 30 Billed at: Start Date Reference #:

Subscriptions

Name	Start Date	End Date	Term	List Price	Discount	Total
Brand Pro Subscription For up to 51,000 students	Jul 1, 2026	Jun 30, 2030	48	$112,000.00	$72,000.00	$40,000.00
Apptegy Suite Subscription (includes Foundations, Messaging Essentials, and Group Connect) For up to 51,000 students	Jul 1, 2026	Jun 30, 2030	48	$1,229,000.00	$156,000.00	$1,073,000.00
					Total Subscription Fees	**$1,113,000.00**

One Time Fees

Name	List Price	Discount	Total
Apptegy Suite Implementation For up to 50 additional site(s)	$59,500.00	$33,500.00	$26,000.00
		Total One Time Fees	**$26,000.00**

Payment Schedule

Payment Schedule	Amount
Total of the above, collectively, the "**Services**"	$1,139,000.00
Upon Signature	$26,000
Jul 1, 2026	$278,250
Jul 1, 2027	$278,250
Jul 1, 2028	$278,250
Jul 1, 2029	$278,250

Signatures

By signing below, Client agrees to purchase the Services described in this Order Form and acknowledges that this Order Form is governed by and incorporates by reference the Apptegy Master Services Agreement available at https://www.apptegy.com/msa/usa ("MSA"). This Order Form, together with the MSA and any Apptegy-provided addenda or other documents referenced or attached, forms the complete agreement between Apptegy and Client (the "Agreement") and is effective as of the date of Client's signature below. By signing, Client agrees to be bound by the terms of the Agreement.

Rutherford County Schools, TN	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

Apptegy, Inc.	
Name	Justin Flaitz
Title	Sales Director, Enterprise
Signature	
Date	

Rutherford County Schools, TN	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

RFP #25-02 - Mobile Food Service Trailer (Blackman High)

Vendors	obile Food Service Trailer
Advanced Concession Trailers	$ 150,401.00
Phoenix Contracting	$ 188,325.00
Truck Builders dba Chef Units	**$ 159,894.50**
Venture Food Trucks	$ 145,374.07

CATEGORY	POSSIBLE POINTS	Advanced Concession Trailers	Phoenix Contracting	**Truck Builders LLC dba Chef Units**	Venture Food Trucks
Company Qualifications	25	19	7	**24.33**	14
Equipment Aligns with School Needs	35	23.67	15.67	**34**	15.33
Cost	40	28	14	**36**	25.33
Point Sub-Total:	**100**	70.67	36.67	**94.33**	54.66

Bid was posted online at BidNet (Sovara)

Recommend: Motion to award to Truck Builders LLC for overall lowest and best bid.

To be funded through CTE funds.

Bid #3838

Fire Extinguisher Service

	*46 Fire & Life Safety	Chief Facility Defense	Koorsen	**Servant Fire**
Item #1 - 5lb. ABC:				
New	$ 45.00	$ 65.00	$ 57.00	**$ 57.00**
Re-Charged	$ 12.00	$ 30.00	$ 40.00	**$ 17.10**
6 Year	$ 19.95	$ 40.00	$ 40.00	**$ 17.10**
Hydrostatic	$ 35.00	$ 50.00	$ 40.00	**$ 32.25**
Item #2 - 10lb. ABC:				
New	$ 69.95	$ 90.00	$ 87.00	**$ 75.00**
Re-Charged	$ 16.00	$ 45.00	$ 55.00	**$ 22.00**
6 Year	$ 23.95	$ 55.00	$ 55.00	**$ 22.00**
Hydrostatic	$ 39.00	$ 65.00	$ 55.00	**$ 37.25**
Item #3 - 5lb. CO2:				
New	$ 149.95	$ 220.00	$ 190.00	**$ 202.00**
Re-Charged	$ 15.00	$ 60.00	$ 30.00	**$ 24.95**
6 Year				
Hydrostatic	$ 45.00	$ 80.00	$ 60.00	**$ 39.95**
Item #4 - 10lb. CO2:				
New	$ 229.95	$ 298.00	$ 277.00	**$ 298.00**
Re-Charged	$ 20.00	$ 70.00	$ 35.00	**$ 26.95**
6 Year				
Hydrostatic	$ 50.00	$ 90.00	$ 65.00	**$ 45.95**
Item #5 - Class K:				
New	$ 219.95	$ 275.00	$ 228.00	**$ 240.00**
Re-Charged	$ 70.00	$ 125.00	$ 108.00	**$ 160.00**
6 Year				
Hydrostatic	$ 93.00	$ 150.00	$ 108.00	**$ 28.50**
Item #6 - Annual Inspections of All Fire Extinguishers	$ 11,364.15	$ 9,500.00	$ 14,385.00	**$ 8,631.00**

*$29.95 trip charge if sent back out to a school after inspection is complete

Bid was posted online at BidNet (Sovara)

Recommend: Motion to award to Servant Fire for overall best bid as highlighted above.

To be funded through the Maintenance Department.

Bid #3839
Fire Alarm System Replacement
Stewarts Creek High School

Bidders	Fire Alarm System Replacement
Gallaher & Associates, Inc.	**$ 192,286.48**

Bid was posted online at BidNet (Sovara)

Rejected Bids from Beacon Technologies and Servant Fire Protection - Both vendors did not include there bid bond.

Recommend: Motion to award to Gallaher & Associates, Inc. for overall lowest and best bid.

To be funded through Maintenance or Capital Projects

Bid #3840

Sound and Lighting Package (LaVergne High School)

Sound and Lighting Package	System Integrations
(Complete Job)	$ 322,570.90

Bid was posted online at BidNet (Sovara)
Rejected Bid from Extreme Lighting and Sounds - Vendor did not attend mandatory pre-bid.

Recommend: Motion to award to Systgem Integrations for overall lowest and best bid.

To be funded through Building Program

2025/26 Rezoning Recommendations

Rutherford County Schools

Board Discussion

December 2025

Process by RSP & Associates

Additional Information added for 12/09/2025

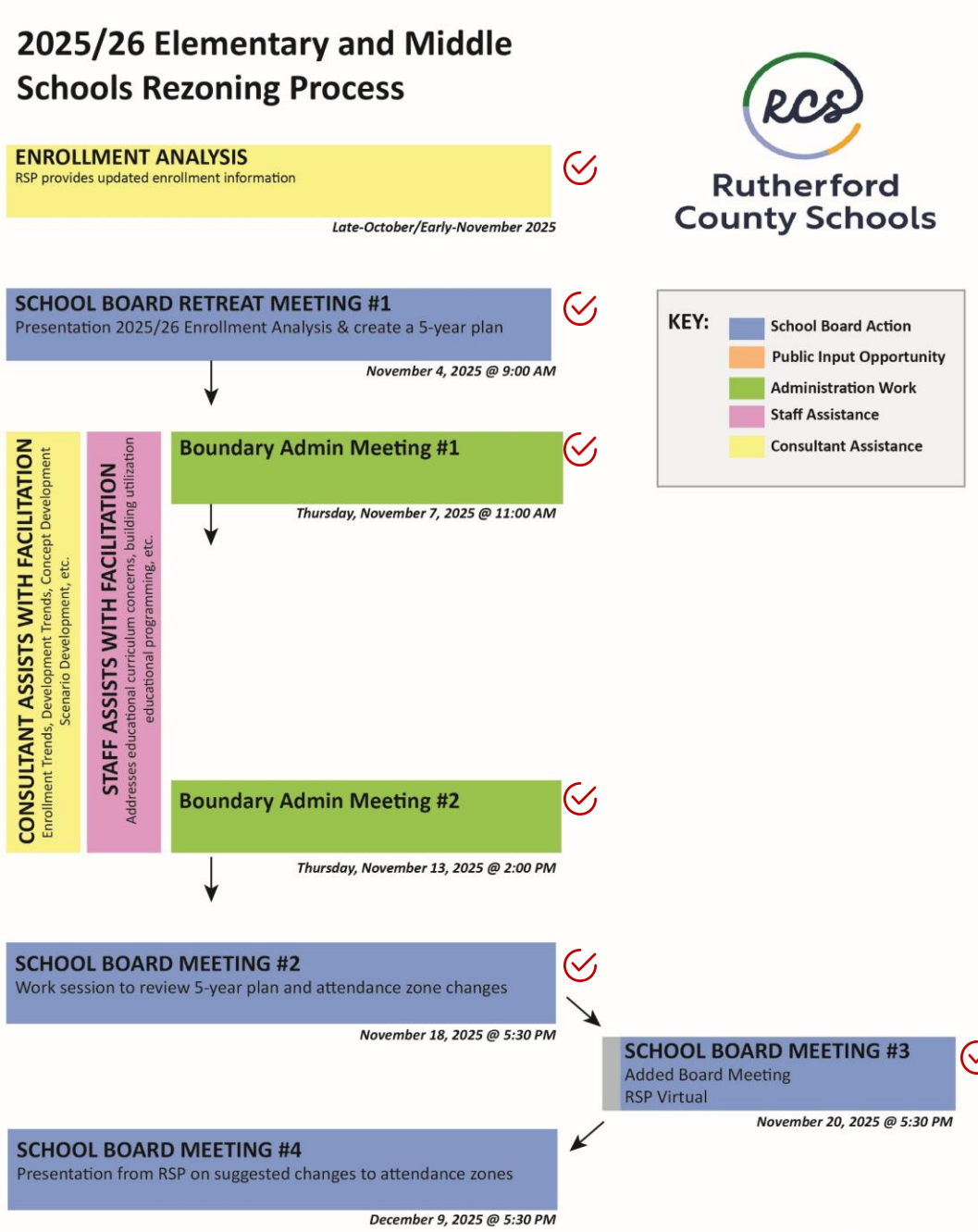
Process Visual

PROCESS FAST FACTS:

- 3 Board Meetings
- 2 Admin Meetings

Goal:

Review school attendance zones for adjustments to improve the balance of enrollment and longevity of capacity. Focus includes minor changes at elementary schools and comprehensive changes at middle schools.



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Current Data Foundation

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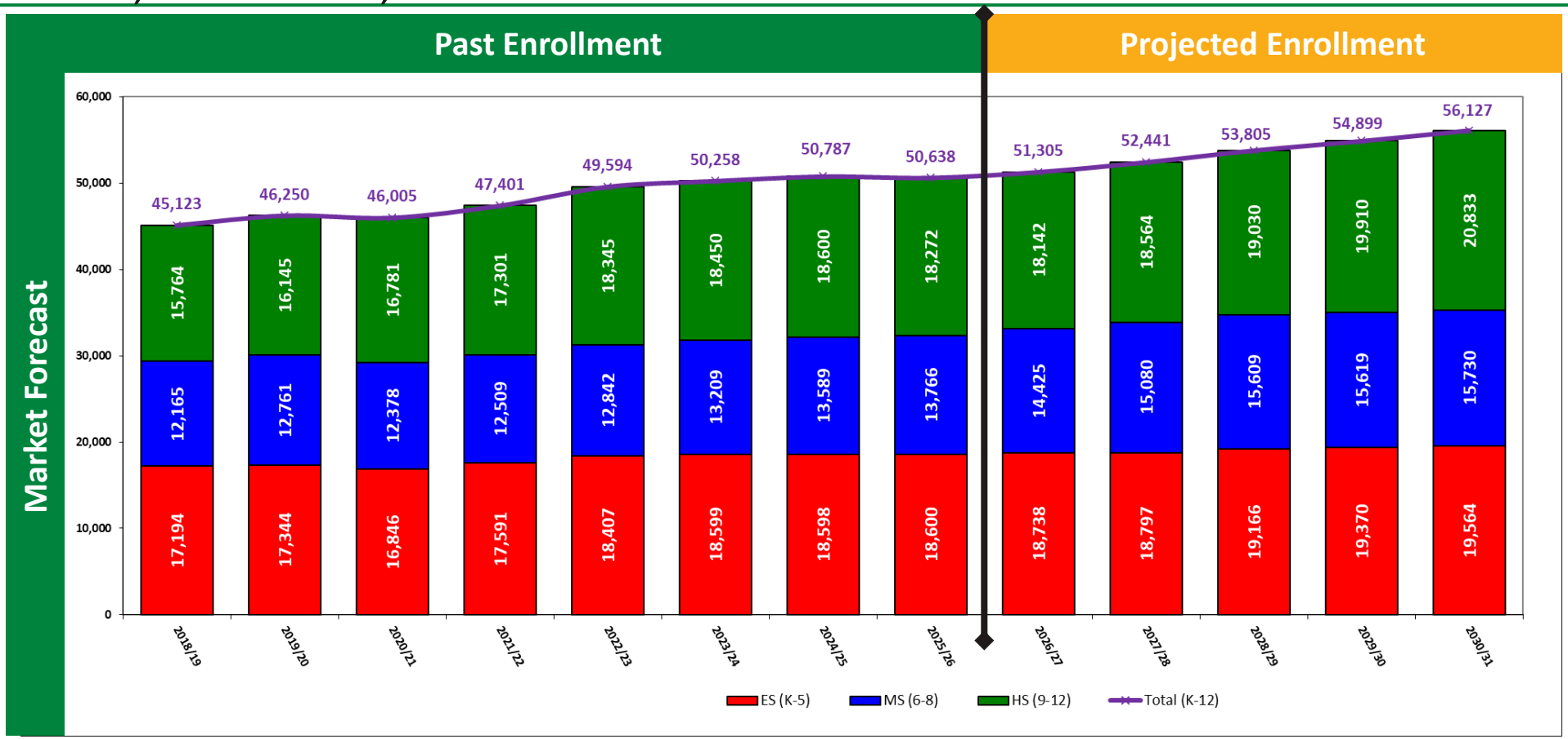
Past, Current, & Future Enrollment



Source: RSP & Associates – October 2025

Observations:

- **District enrollment is forecasted to increase by 5,489 students by 2030/31; totaling enrollment to 56,127 (+10.8%)**
- **Elementary enrollment is forecasted to increase by 964 students by 2030/31; totaling enrollment to 19,564 (+5.2%)**
- **Middle School enrollment is forecasted to increase by 1,944 students by 2030/31; totaling enrollment to 15,730 (+14.1%)**
- **High School enrollment is forecasted to increase by 2,561 students by 2030/31; totaling enrollment to 20,833 (+14.0%)**

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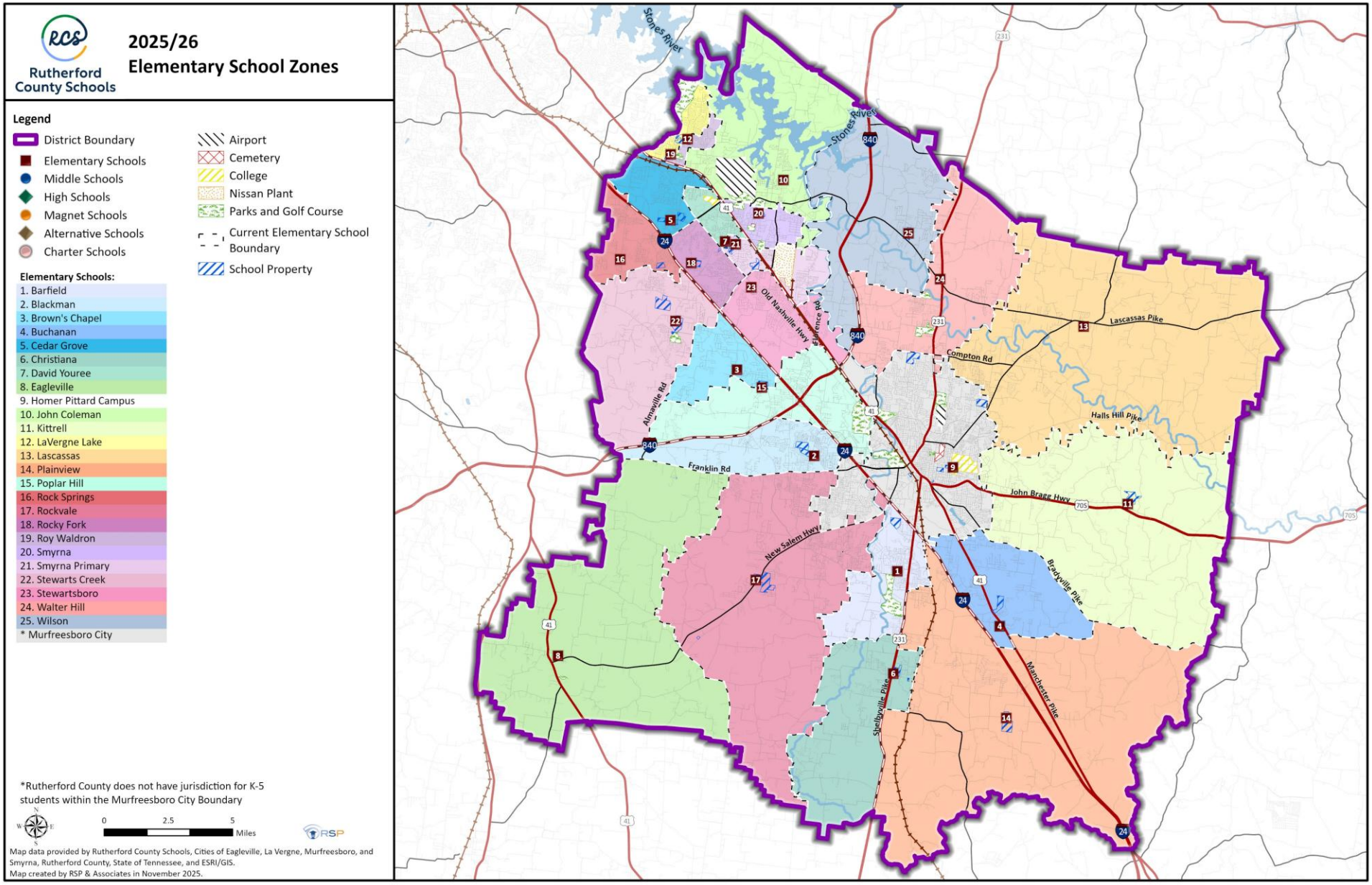
Disclaimer. This is a projected outlook based on the information examined in this analysis. All past student data is exported from the district student database. The student database export may not always align with the Official Counts (Statistically 99% greater match by grade).

Elementary School Boundary Map



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Current Projections Tables: Elementary Schools

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

Current Elementary Zones:	Capacity	Primary Focus 2026/27	Primary Focus 2027/28	Future Planning 2028/29	Future Planning 2029/30	Future Planning 2030/31	2027/28 Utilization
Barfield Elementary	1,020	750	736	725	741	725	72%
Blackman Elementary	975	840	791	795	783	783	81%
Brown's Chapel Elementary	975	534	519	512	491	487	53%
Buchanan Elementary	528	407	397	406	403	402	75%
Cedar Grove Elementary	942	720	736	750	761	760	78%
Christiana Elementary	730	577	556	544	523	525	76%
David Youree Elementary	853	681	694	740	729	716	81%
Eagleville Elementary	616	345	341	344	327	329	55%
John Colemon Elementary	920	805	782	757	770	769	85%
Kittrell Elementary	600	401	415	446	474	509	69%
Lascassas Elementary	665	568	576	583	616	633	87%
LaVergne Lake Elementary	1,000	905	847	812	788	784	85%
Murfreesboro Citys	*0*	*153*	*183*	*206*	*248*	*277*	*0%*
Plainview Elementary	1,120	669	667	685	675	670	60%
Poplar Hill Elementary	1,100	881	920	923	931	905	84%
Rock Springs Elementary	1,265	982	1,024	1,082	1,126	1,146	81%
Rockvale Elementary	1,585	1,146	1,193	1,259	1,297	1,364	75%
Rocky Fork Elementary	990	793	773	788	792	818	78%
Roy Waldron Elementary	895	811	806	805	786	806	90%
Smyrna Elementary	816	549	540	534	518	511	66%
Smyrna Primary	625	561	559	568	570	568	89%
Stewarts Creek Elementary	1,125	1,217	1,318	1,443	1,594	1,679	117%
Stewartsboro Elementary	855	789	807	838	830	816	94%
Walter Hill Elementary	690	550	538	563	570	575	78%
Wilson Elementary	975	530	502	481	451	431	51%
Elementary (K-5) Total:	**21,865**	**17,164**	**17,220**	**17,589**	**17,794**	**17,988**	**79%**

School Utilization Legend

Over 100% School Capacity

Under 70% School Capacity

← **Primary Focus!**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

11/11/2025

Note: Total projections may differ from enrollment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

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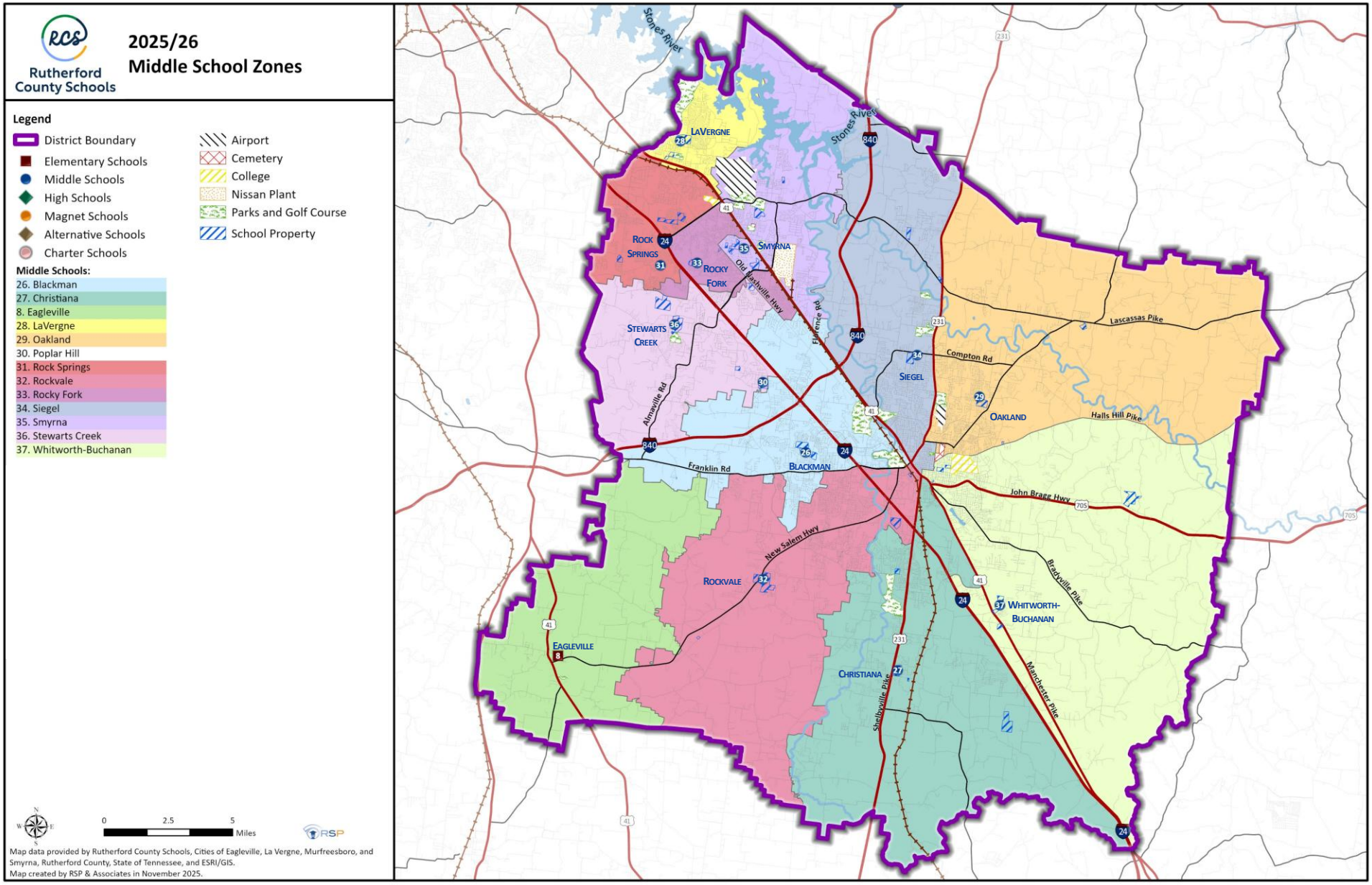
Important: Projections may be slightly different than in the official projection tables due to changing the methodology of student placement. Tables more accurately align with re-zoning conversations.

2025/26 Middle School Boundary Map



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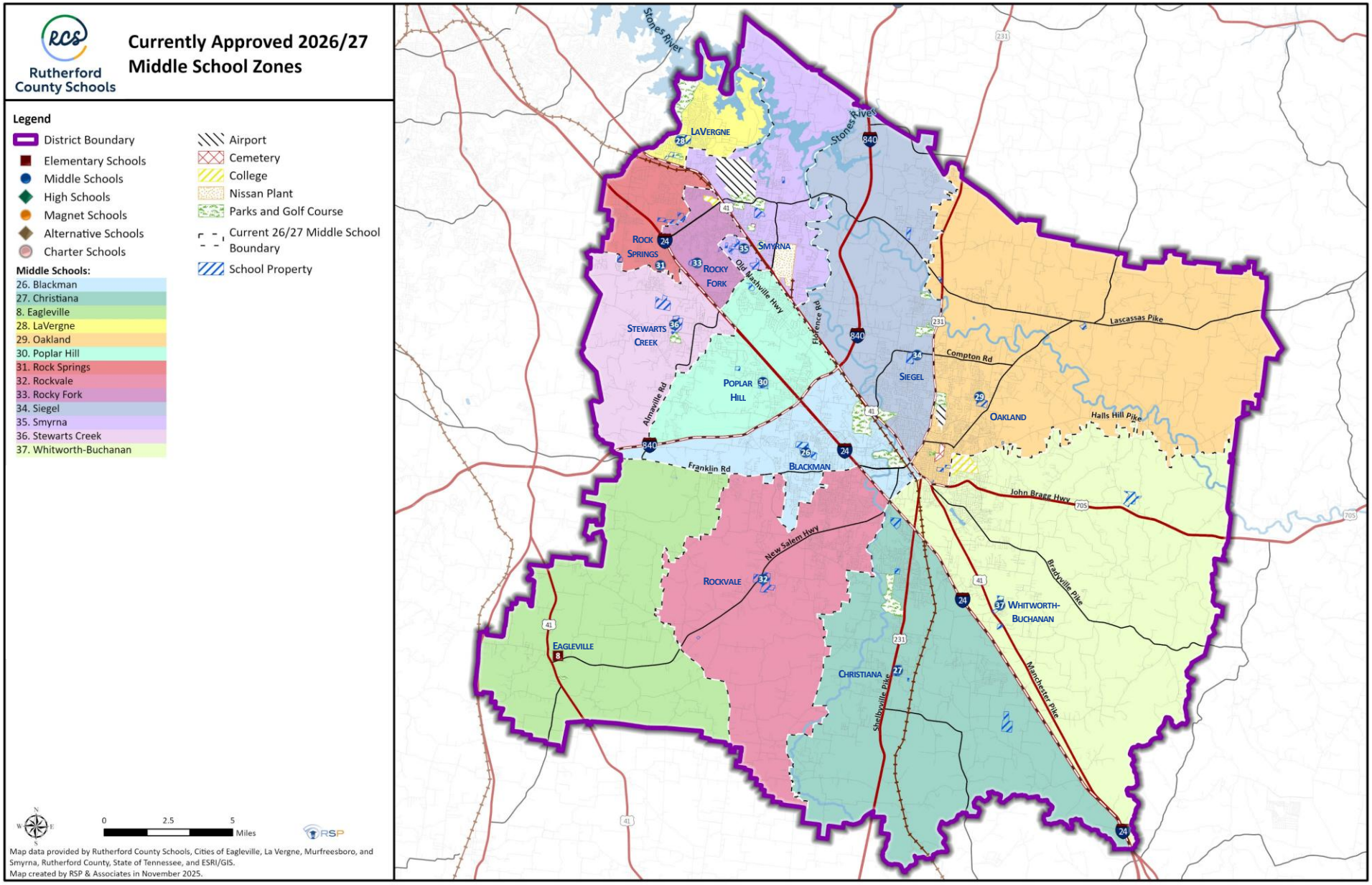
2026/27 Middle School Boundary Map



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Current Projection Tables: Middle Schools

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

		Primary Focus		Future Planning			2027/28
Current Middle School Zones:	Capacity	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Utilization
Blackman Middle	1,568	1,600	1,783	1,887	1,807	1,703	114%
Christiana Middle	1,108	1,136	1,174	1,222	1,178	1,196	106%
Eagleville Middle	308	241	247	227	227	220	80%
LaVergne Middle	1,400	989	1,032	1,112	1,131	1,127	74%
Oakland Middle	1,440	1,417	1,395	1,372	1,351	1,337	97%
Poplar Hill Middle	1,200	1,036	1,089	1,139	1,138	1,161	91%
Rock Springs Middle	1,109	865	971	1,095	1,121	1,178	88%
Rockvale Middle	1,470	1,608	1,602	1,541	1,605	1,660	109%
Rocky Fork Middle	1,075	974	1,016	1,064	1,012	1,001	95%
Siegel Middle	1,107	1,074	1,114	1,093	1,097	1,090	101%
Smyrna Middle	1,200	1,023	1,133	1,199	1,211	1,178	94%
Stewarts Creek Middle	1,077	907	1,004	1,129	1,212	1,368	93%
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	1,075	775	739	747	748	729	69%
Middle School (6-8) Total:	15,137	13,645	14,299	14,827	14,838	14,948	94%

School Utilization Legend
Over 100% School Capacity
Under 70% School Capacity

← **Primary Focus!**
← **Primary Focus!**
← **Primary Focus!**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

11/11/2025

Note: Total projections may differn from enorllment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

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Important: Projections may be slightly different than in the official projection tables due to changing the methodology of student placement. Tables more accurately align with re-zoning conversations.

Key Challenges to Address (2026/27 and 2027/28)

Elementary School Zones:

- Stewarts Creek Elementary is forecasted to exceed capacity
  - By expanding the Brown's Chapel Elementary zone, relief can be provided to Stewarts Creek for the next two years
- Walter Hill Elementary is an older building with enrollment greater than ideal
  - By expanding the Wilson Elementary zone, relief can be provided to Walter Hill for the foreseeable future

Middle School Zones:

- Poplar Hill opens next year in 2026/27 (1,200 capacity)
  - Previously reviewed middle school zones do not adequately **balance enrollment** and **utilize available capacity** district-wide
- Blackman Middle is forecasted to exceed capacity (nearing 1,800 students, +110%)
- Christiana Middle is forecasted to exceed capacity (nearing 1,200 students, ~110%)
- Rockvale MS Middle is forecasted to exceed capacity (nearing 1,600 students, ~110%)
- District has not completed a comprehensive middle school rezone since the opening of Rocky Fork MS in 2017.

IMPORTANT:

Additional Middle School capacity is needed to fully address middle school over-utilization challenges. The presented rezoning concepts focus on improving enrollment balance for the next two years (2026/27 to 2027/28).

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Preliminary Rezoning Concepts

Focus: Elementary

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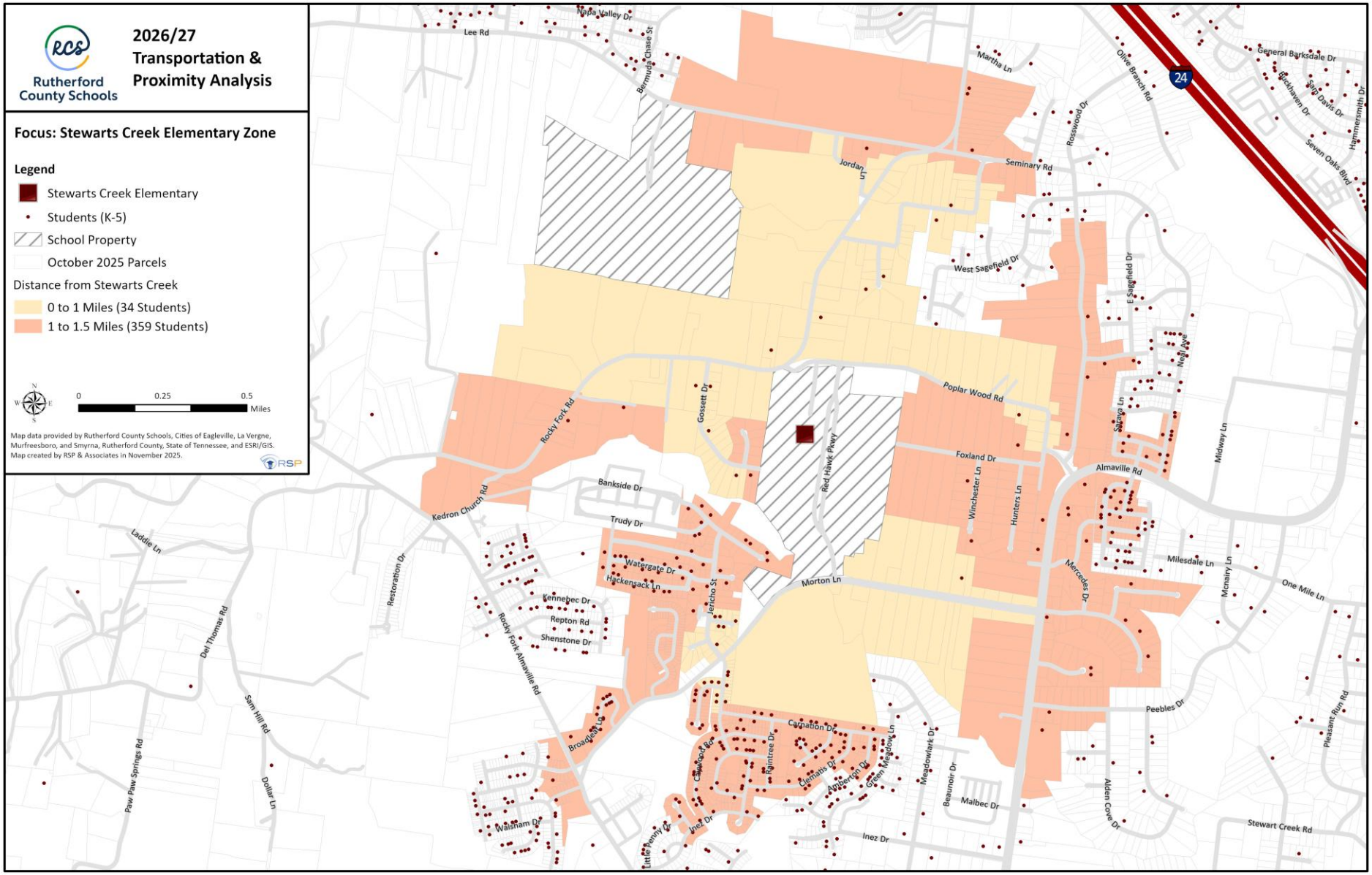
Stewarts Creek Challenges: Growth & Proximity



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Stewarts Creek Challenges: Rocky Fork Almaville Rd

Rutherford County Schools

Stewarts Creek Elementary Growth Areas

Focus: Stewarts Creek Elementary Zone

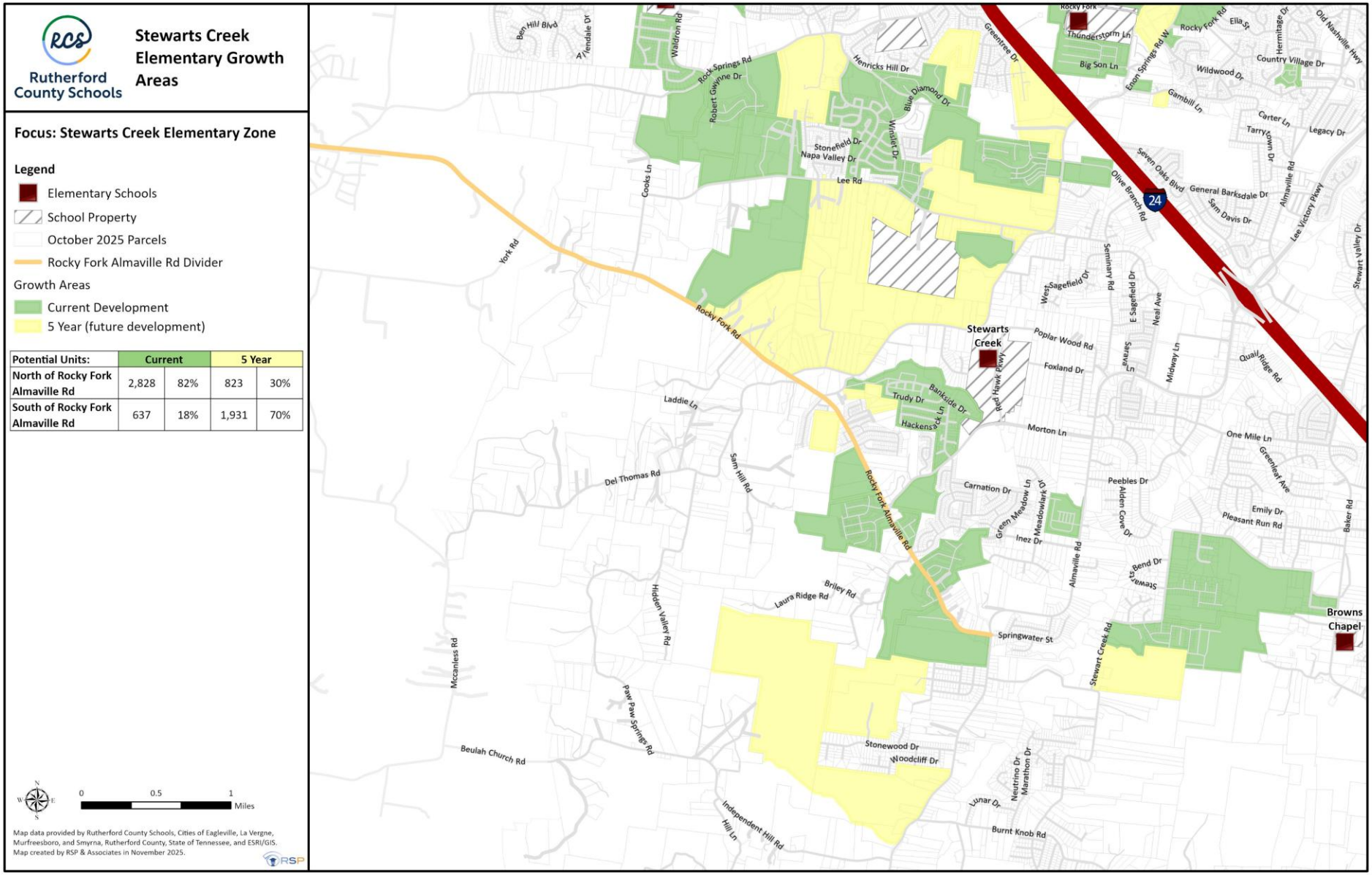
Legend

- Elementary Schools
- School Property
- October 2025 Parcels
- Rocky Fork Almaville Rd Divider

Growth Areas

- Current Development
- 5 Year (future development)

Potential Units:	Current		5 Year	
North of Rocky Fork Almaville Rd	2,828	82%	823	30%
South of Rocky Fork Almaville Rd	637	18%	1,931	70%



0 0.5 1 Miles

Map data provided by Rutherford County Schools, Cities of Eagleville, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna, Rutherford County, State of Tennessee, and ESRI/GIS.
Map created by RSP & Associates in November 2025.

RSP

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Elementary Concept 1

Rutherford County Schools

2026/27 Elementary Zones Concept #1 (DRAFT)

Legend

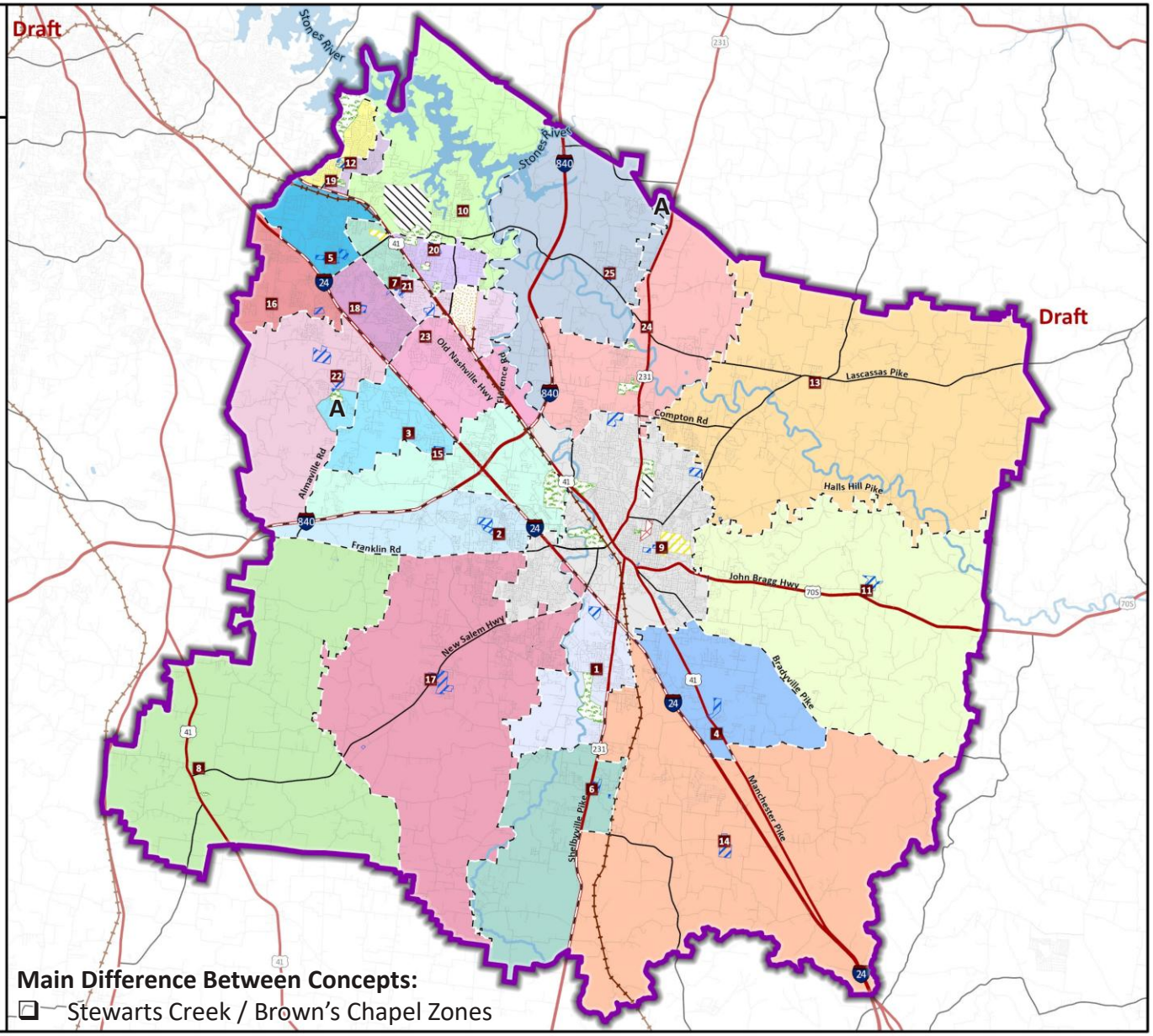
- District Boundary
- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Magnet Schools
- Alternative Schools
- Charter Schools
- Airport
- Cemetery
- College
- Nissan Plant
- Parks and Golf Course
- Current Elementary School Boundary
- School Property

Elementary Schools:

1. Barfield
2. Blackman
3. Brown's Chapel
4. Buchanan
5. Cedar Grove
6. Christiana
7. David Youree
8. Eagleville
9. Homer Pittard Campus
10. John Coleman
11. Kittrell
12. LaVergne Lake
13. Lascassas
14. Plainview
15. Poplar Hill
16. Rock Springs
17. Rockvale
18. Rocky Fork
19. Roy Waldron
20. Smyrna
21. Smyrna Primary
22. Stewarts Creek
23. Stewartsboro
24. Walter Hill
25. Wilson

* Murfreesboro City

Area A:
Moves from Stewarts Creek ES to Brown's Chapel ES



Main Difference Between Concepts:

- Stewarts Creek / Brown's Chapel Zones

*Rutherford County does not have jurisdiction for K-5 students within the Murfreesboro City Boundary

0 2.5 5 Miles

Map data provided by Rutherford County Schools, Cities of Eagleville, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna, Rutherford County, State of Tennessee, and ESRI/GIS.
Map created by RSP & Associates in November 2025.

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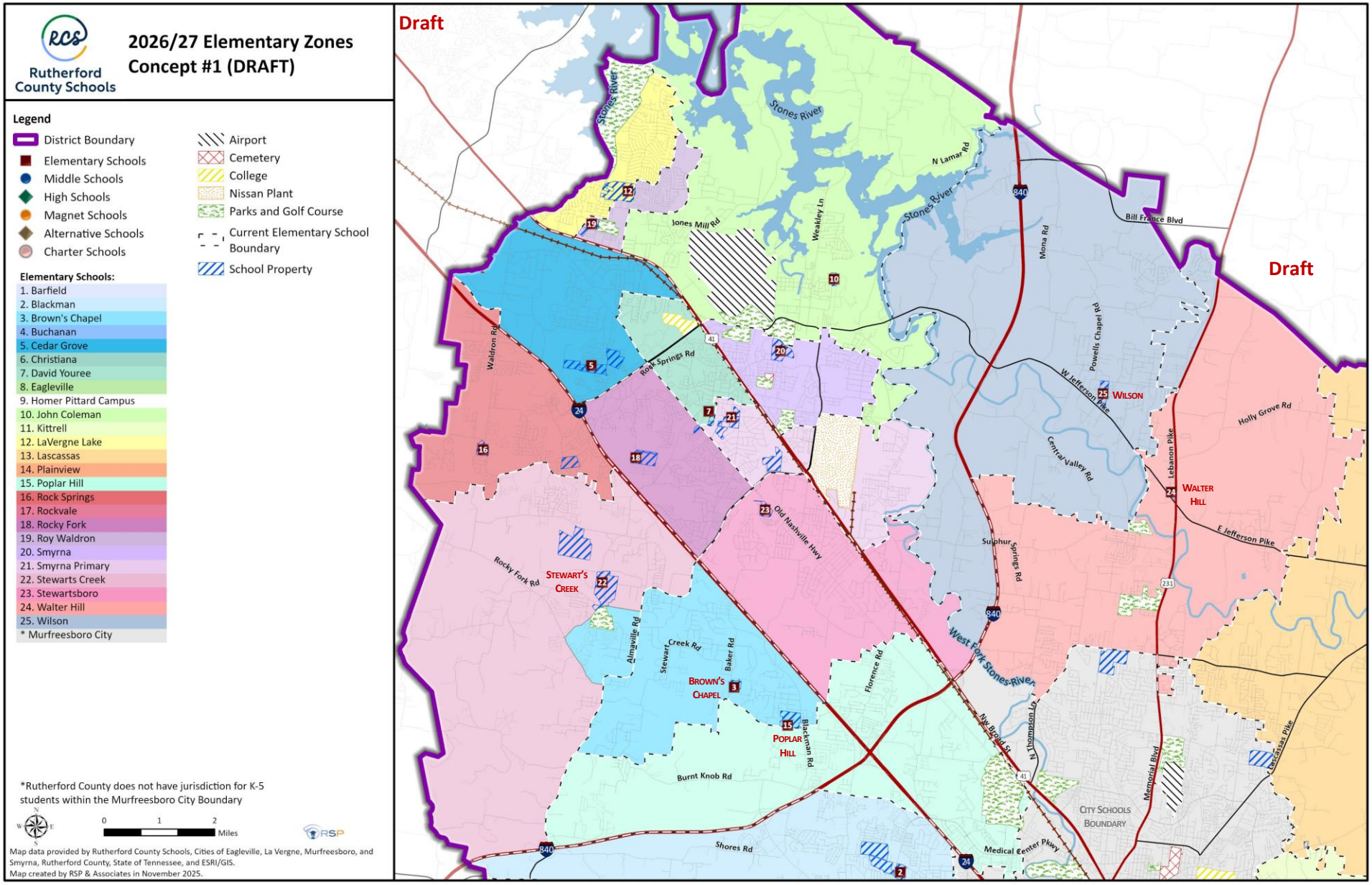
Elementary Concept 1 – Zoomed in View



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Elementary Concept 1 Projections (Hybrid Reside)

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

		Primary Focus		Future Planning			2027/28
Concept 1 Elementary Zones:	Capacity	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Utilization
Barfield Elementary	1,020	750	736	725	741	725	72%
Blackman Elementary	975	840	791	795	783	783	81%
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Christiana Elementary	730	577	556	544	523	525	76%
David Youree Elementary	853	681	694	740	729	716	81%
Eagleville Elementary	616	345	341	344	327	329	55%
John Colemon Elementary	920	805	782	757	770	769	85%
Kittrell Elementary	600	401	415	446	474	509	69%
Lascassas Elementary	665	568	576	583	616	633	87%
LaVergne Lake Elementary	1,000	905	847	812	788	784	85%
Murfreesboro Citys	*0*	*153*	*183*	*206*	*248*	*277*	*0%*
Plainview Elementary	1,120	669	667	685	675	670	60%
Poplar Hill Elementary	1,100	881	920	923	931	905	84%
Rock Springs Elementary	1,265	982	1,024	1,082	1,126	1,146	81%
Rockvale Elementary	1,585	1,146	1,193	1,259	1,297	1,364	75%
Rocky Fork Elementary	990	793	773	788	792	818	78%
Roy Waldron Elementary	895	811	806	805	786	806	90%
Smyrna Elementary	816	549	540	534	518	511	66%
Smyrna Primary	625	561	559	568	570	568	89%
Stewarts Creek Elementary	1,125	891	954	1,043	1,163	1,244	85%
Stewartsboro Elementary	855	789	807	838	830	816	94%
Walter Hill Elementary	690	550	538	563	570	575	78%
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School Utilization Legend

- Over 100% School Capacity
- Under 70% School Capacity

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, December 2025

12/5/2025

Note: Total projections may differ from enrollment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

FAST FACTS

Primary Focus Years:

Stewarts Creek decreases to less then **1,000 total students** the next two years

- About 350 students rezoned from Stewarts Creek to Brown's Chapel

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Concept 1 Neighborhood and Growth Impact

Concept 1: RSP Planning Area Name:	Current Zone	Proposed Zone	Growth Timing	Current Units	Potential Units	Student Totals: Current	Student Totals: Year 5
Cedar Hills Townhomes (East)	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	0	88	0	14
Derby Run	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	125	77	9	27
Lakeview Glen	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	1	176	0	36
Stewarts Glen	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	38	21	0	3
Amberton	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	232	7	135	183
Creekside	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	147	0	25	25
Cedar Hills	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	347	0	135	173

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Note:
Some planning areas may show potential housing units even if they are not designated as growth areas. When a development is more than 95% built out, the growth designation may be removed. Not all potential units are expected to be completed within the projection window; they simply indicate that some level of building activity is occurring. Year 5 projections reflect the type of development and the anticipated pace of construction.

DISCLAIMER: Table is not an all-encompassing list of zone changes. Table capture the RSP planning areas that moved with students projected to reside there.

Shift of Potential Housing Units by Zone:	CONCEPT 1: Loss	Gain	Net
Brown's Chapel Elementary		369	**369**
Stewarts Creek Elementary	-369		**-369**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Observations:

- Less potential growth is adjusted from Stewarts Creek to Brown's Chapel in this concept (+370 units)
- About 350-450 students are projected to be adjusted from Stewarts Creek to Browns's Chapel in this concept
- *Greater current student impact due movement of existing neighborhoods*

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Elementary Concept 2

Rutherford County Schools

2026/27 Elementary Zones Concept #2 (DRAFT)

Legend

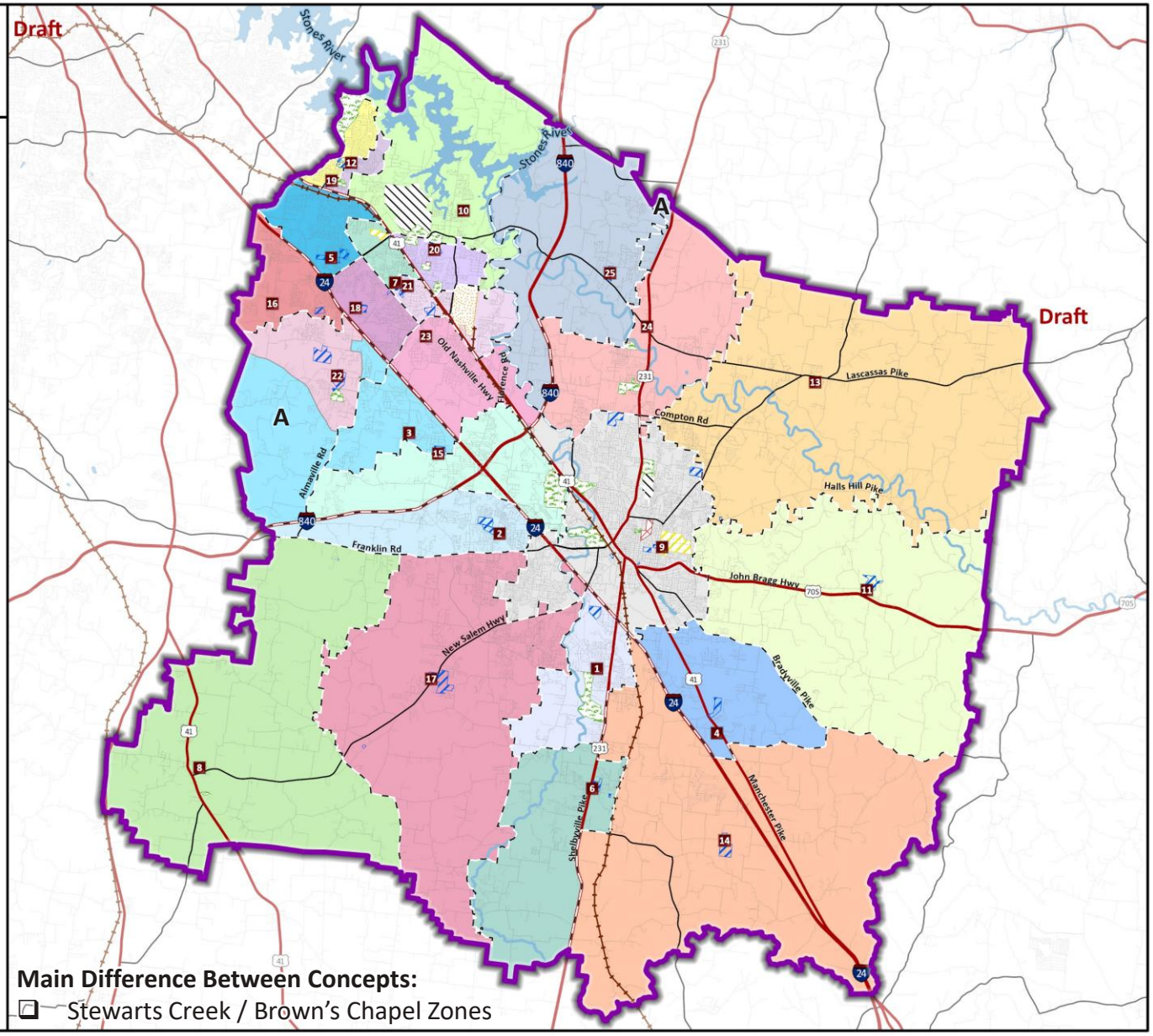
- District Boundary
- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Magnet Schools
- Alternative Schools
- Charter Schools
- Airport
- Cemetery
- College
- Nissan Plant
- Parks and Golf Course
- Current Elementary School Boundary
- School Property

Elementary Schools:

1. Barfield
2. Blackman
3. Brown's Chapel
4. Buchanan
5. Cedar Grove
6. Christiana
7. David Youree
8. Eagleville
9. Homer Pittard Campus
10. John Coleman
11. Kittrell
12. LaVergne Lake
13. Lascassas
14. Plainview
15. Poplar Hill
16. Rock Springs
17. Rockvale
18. Rocky Fork
19. Roy Waldron
20. Smyrna
21. Smyrna Primary
22. Stewarts Creek
23. Stewartsboro
24. Walter Hill
25. Wilson

* Murfreesboro City

Area A:
Moves from Stewarts Creek ES to Brown's Chapel ES



Main Difference Between Concepts:

- Stewarts Creek / Brown's Chapel Zones

*Rutherford County does not have jurisdiction for K-5 students within the Murfreesboro City Boundary

0 2.5 5 Miles

Map data provided by Rutherford County Schools, Cities of Eagleville, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna, Rutherford County, State of Tennessee, and ESRI/GIS.
Map created by RSP & Associates in November 2025.

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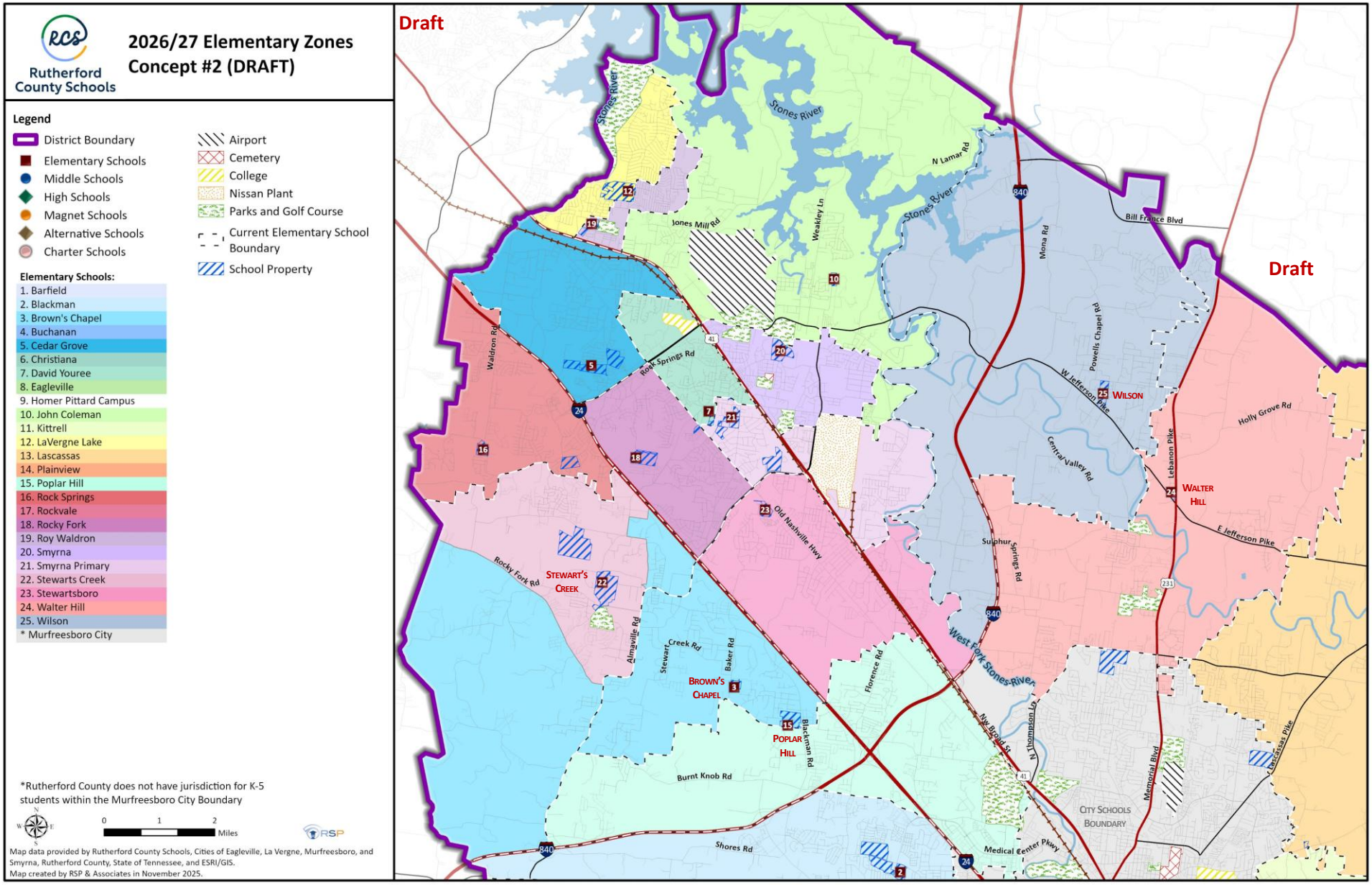
Elementary Concept 2 – Zoomed in View



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Elementary Concept 2 Projections (Hybrid Reside)

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

Concept 2 Elementary Zones:	Capacity	Primary Focus 2026/27	Primary Focus 2027/28	Future Planning 2028/29	Future Planning 2029/30	Future Planning 2030/31	2027/28 Utilization
Barfield Elementary	1,020	750	736	725	741	725	72%
Blackman Elementary	975	840	791	795	783	783	81%
Brown's Chapel Elementary	975	796	802	820	856	872	82%
Buchanan Elementary	528	407	397	406	403	402	75%
Cedar Grove Elementary	942	720	736	750	761	760	78%
Christiana Elementary	730	577	556	544	523	525	76%
David Youree Elementary	853	681	694	740	729	716	81%
Eagleville Elementary	616	345	341	344	327	329	55%
John Colemon Elementary	920	805	782	757	770	769	85%
Kittrell Elementary	600	401	415	446	474	509	69%
Lascassas Elementary	665	568	576	583	616	633	87%
LaVergne Lake Elementary	1,000	905	847	812	788	784	85%
Murfreesboro Citys	*0*	*153*	*183*	*206*	*248*	*277*	*0%*
Plainview Elementary	1,120	669	667	685	675	670	60%
Poplar Hill Elementary	1,100	881	920	923	931	905	84%
Rock Springs Elementary	1,265	982	1,024	1,082	1,126	1,146	81%
Rockvale Elementary	1,585	1,146	1,193	1,259	1,297	1,364	75%
Rocky Fork Elementary	990	793	773	788	792	818	78%
Roy Waldron Elementary	895	811	806	805	786	806	90%
Smyrna Elementary	816	549	540	534	518	511	66%
Smyrna Primary	625	561	559	568	570	568	89%
Stewarts Creek Elementary	1,125	955	1,035	1,136	1,227	1,294	92%
Stewartsboro Elementary	855	789	807	838	830	816	94%
Walter Hill Elementary	690	550	538	563	570	575	78%
Wilson Elementary	975	530	502	481	451	431	51%
Elementary (K-5) Total:	**21,865**	**17,164**	**17,220**	**17,590**	**17,792**	**17,988**	**79%**

School Utilization Legend

- Over 100% School Capacity
- Under 70% School Capacity

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, December 2025

12/5/2025

Note: Total projections may differ from enrollment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

FAST FACTS

Primary Focus Years:

Stewarts Creek decreases to less then **1,100 total students** the next two years

- About 300 students rezoned from Stewarts Creek to Brown's Chapel

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Elementary Concept 2: Neighborhood and Growth Impact

Concept 2: RSP Planning Area Name:	Current Zone	Proposed Zone	Growth Timing	Current Units	Potential Units	Student Totals: Current	Student Totals: Year 5
Blakeney	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	246	16	71	81
Briley Downs	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	4	212	1	41
Reverie at Music City	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	3	318	2	22
Tucker's Pointe	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	Current	3	91	0	22
Hidden Valley Farms	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	124	0	11	7
Lyndwood	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	5 Year	3	1500	4	38
South light	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	5 Year	1	346	0	14
Rose C Neal	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	5 Year	0	85	0	6
Sagefield	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	396	0	52	41
Almaville & Independent Hill Rd (Ste	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	104	0	13	11
Saddle Grove	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	23	0	7	15
Belmont	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	215	0	63	52
Emmett Heights East	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	283	0	43	43
Davis Farms	Stewarts Creek	Browns Chapel	No	93	0	4	5

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Note:
Some planning areas may show potential housing units even if they are not designated as growth areas. When a development is more than 95% built out, the growth designation may be removed. Not all potential units are expected to be completed within the projection window; they simply indicate that some level of building activity is occurring. Year 5 projections reflect the type of development and the anticipated pace of construction.

DISCLAIMER: Table is not an all-encompassing list of zone changes. Table capture the RSP planning areas that moved with students projected to reside there.

Shift of Potential Housing Units by Zone:	CONCEPT 2: Loss	Gain	Net
Brown's Chapel Elementary		2,568	**2,568**
Stewarts Creek Elementary	-2,568		**-2,568**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Observations:

- More potential growth is adjusted from Stewarts Creek to Brown's Chapel in this concept (+2,500 units)
- About 300-400 students are projected to be adjusted from Stewarts Creek to Browns's Chapel in this concept
- *Greater potential student impact due movement of developing neighborhoods*

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Preliminary Rezoning Concepts

Focus: Middle Schools

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Middle School Concept 1

Rutherford County Schools

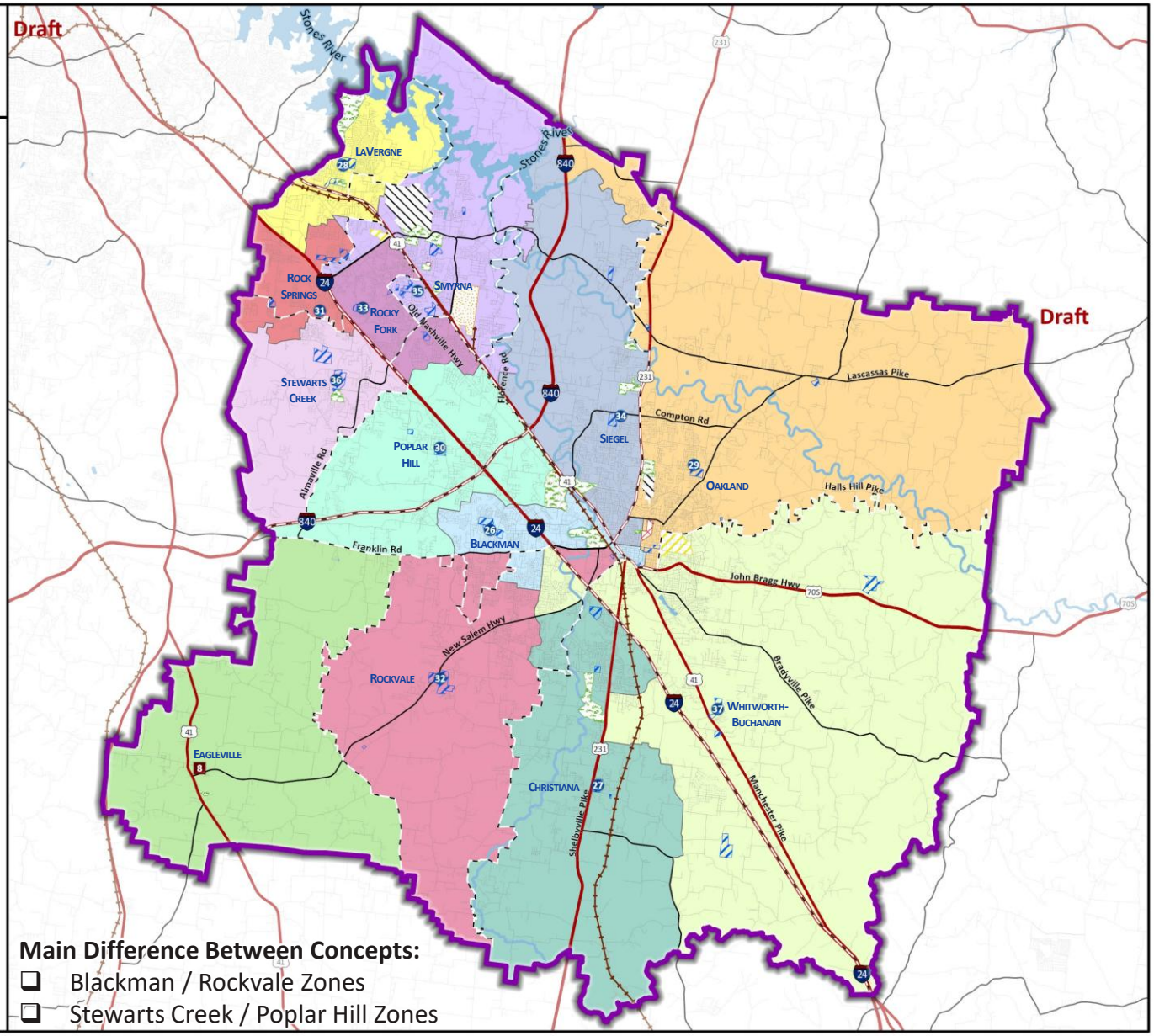
2026/27 Middle School Zones Concept #1 (DRAFT)

Legend

- District Boundary
- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Magnet Schools
- Alternative Schools
- Charter Schools
- Airport
- Cemetery
- College
- Nissan Plant
- Parks and Golf Course
- Current 26/27 Middle School Boundary
- School Property

Middle Schools:

26. Blackman
27. Christiana
8. Eagleville
28. LaVergne
29. Oakland
30. Poplar Hill
31. Rock Springs
32. Rockvale
33. Rocky Fork
34. Siegel
35. Smyrna
36. Stewarts Creek
37. Whitworth-Buchanan



Overview of Proposed Changes:

- ❑ Downtown core area aligned to High School zone changes

Northwest → Southeast Shifts:

- ❑ LaVergne extends south
- ❑ Rock Springs extends south
- ❑ Smyrna extends south
- ❑ Rocky Fork extends south (Almaville Rd)
- ❑ Poplar Hill expands south of I-840
- ❑ Blackman extends south of Franklin Rd, but loses area along Rucker Lane
- ❑ Christiana extends west to Cason Lan
- ❑ Whitworth-Buchanan extends west

0 2.5 5 Miles

Map data provided by Rutherford County Schools, Cities of Eagleville, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna, Rutherford County, State of Tennessee, and ESRI/GIS.
Map created by RSP & Associates in November 2025.

Main Difference Between Concepts:

- ❑ Blackman / Rockvale Zones
- ❑ Stewarts Creek / Poplar Hill Zones

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Middle School Concept 1 Projections (Hybrid Reside)

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

Concept 1 Middle School Zones:	Capacity	Primary Focus 2026/27	Primary Focus 2027/28	Future Planning 2028/29	Future Planning 2029/30	Future Planning 2030/31	2027/28 Utilization
Blackman Middle	1,568	1,242	1,416	1,543	1,479	1,380	90%
Christiana Middle	1,108	1,105	1,115	1,131	1,083	1,079	101%
Eagleville Middle	308	241	247	227	227	220	80%
LaVergne Middle	1,400	1,239	1,296	1,409	1,419	1,414	93%
Oakland Middle	1,440	1,426	1,423	1,410	1,370	1,359	99%
Poplar Hill Middle	1,200	1,032	1,045	1,046	1,011	1,044	87%
Rock Springs Middle	1,109	778	887	1,021	1,057	1,127	80%
Rockvale Middle	1,470	1,403	1,421	1,388	1,436	1,491	97%
Rocky Fork Middle	1,075	1,102	1,149	1,191	1,152	1,129	107%
Siegel Middle	1,107	1,034	1,063	1,033	1,049	1,041	96%
Smyrna Middle	1,200	1,147	1,258	1,336	1,349	1,340	105%
Stewarts Creek Middle	1,077	828	923	1,018	1,091	1,222	86%
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	1,075	1,073	1,053	1,074	1,112	1,104	98%
Middle School (6-8) Total:	15,137	13,650	14,296	14,827	14,835	14,950	94%

School Utilization Legend
Over 100% School Capacity
Under 70% School Capacity

IMPORTANT: By 2028/29 to 2030/31 additional middle school capacity is needed to fully address challenges.

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025 11/11/2025

Note: Total projections may differ from enrollment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

FAST FACTS – Primary Focus Years:

- Blackman Middle reduced to less than 1,500 students
- Christiana Middle reduced to less than 1,150 students
- Poplar Hill Middle reduced to less than 1,100 students
- Rockvale Middle reduced to less than 1,500 students
- Rocky Fork and Smyrna Middle increased to over their capacities

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Middle School Concept 1: Neighborhood and Growth Impact

Concept 1: RSP Planning Area Name:	Current Zone	Proposed Zone	Growth Timing	Current Units	Potential Units	Student Totals: Current	Student Totals: Year 5
Kingdom Ridge PUD	Blackman MS	Rockvale MS	No	988	0	134	218
Gazebo Park Estates	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	380	0	34	35
Springhouse	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	248	0	21	22
Cimarron	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	350	0	24	28
Kingsbury	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	158	7	23	37
Oakton	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	238	0	44	37
Blackman Station	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	149	0	15	22
South of Buchanan Estates	Christiana MS	W-Buchanan MS	Current	259	606	24	52
Buchanan Estates Section 3	Christiana MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	389	0	40	56
Wilston	Oakland MS	Siegle MS	No	569	0	32	33
Burton Farms	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	430	0	62	110
Homewood Park-Belle Meade	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	497	0	31	35
Green Acres	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	239	0	42	48
Key Estates	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	296	0	34	35
Rosemont	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	122	0	25	22
Cantrell Farms	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	105	0	16	24
Morgans Retreat	Rock Springs MS	Smyrna MS	No	107	0	25	31
Lands End	Rock Springs MS	Rock Springs MS	No	242	0	16	39
Fortland Acres	Rock Springs MS	LaVergne MS	No	303	0	4	39
Center Hill and Eastwood	Rock Springs MS	LaVergne MS	No	535	0	31	88
Lands End	Rock Springs MS	LaVergne MS	No	242	0	21	205
Clarkwood	Rockvale MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	747	0	53	51
Burgess Estates/Cason Grove	Rockvale MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	1,003	0	63	94
Evergreen Farms	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	642	0	66	75
Evergreen Farms Section 10	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	540	0	58	62
Plantation South	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	433	0	83	80
Carrington Park Apartments	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	672	0	24	27
Autumn Wood Apartments	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	562	0	35	29
Cedar Grove Villas	Rocky Fork MS	Smyrna MS	Current	332	49	20	31
Akins Ridge and Stonehenge	Rocky Fork MS	Smyrna MS	No	612	0	76	88
Grand Oak at Town Park Apts	Rocky Fork MS	Smyrna MS	No	300	0	14	23
Stoneridge Farms	Rocky Fork MS	Smyrna MS	No	336	0	38	40
Cascade Falls and Chapel Hills	Siegel MS	Oakland MS	No	1,122	32	54	128
Heritage Valley	Smyrna MS	LaVergne MS	No	755	0	109	126
Gwynee Farms	Stewarts Creek MS	Rock Springs MS	Current	221	418	2	59
Mcfarlin Pointe	Stewarts Creek MS	Rock Springs MS	No	340	0	37	35

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

DISCLAIMER: Table is not an all-encompassing list of zone changes. Table capture the RSP planning areas that moved with more than 20 students projected to reside there.

Shift of Potential Housing Units by Zone:	CONCEPT 1: Loss	Gain	Net
Blackman Middle	-657	631	**-26**
Christiana Middle	-2,093	178	**-1,915**
Eagleville Middle	0	0	**0**
LaVergne Middle	0	16	**16**
Oakland Middle	-631	332	**-299**
Poplar Hill Middle	-109	162	**53**
Rock Springs Middle	-16	1,290	**1,274**
Rockvale Middle	-761	495	**-266**
Rocky Fork Middle	-1,503	109	**-1,394**
Siegel Middle	-364	32	**-332**
Smyrna Middle	0	1,503	**1,503**
Stewarts Creek Middle	-1,290	0	**-1,290**
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	0	2,676	**2,676**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

There is a significant northwest → southeast restructuring, with many neighborhoods shifting toward Poplar Hill, Rocky Fork MS, and Whitworth-Buchanan MS to rebalance enrollment.

Schools with Largest Net Changes:

- **Increase in Potential Units:**
  - **Whitworth-Buchanan MS** +2,676 units
  - **Smyrna MS** +1,503 units
  - **Rock Springs MS** +1,274 units
- **Net Increase in Projected Students (Yr 5):**
  - **LaVergne MS** +475 students
  - **Whitworth-Buchanan MS** +366 students
  - **Smyrna MS** +159 students
- **Net Decrease in Students:**
  - **Blackman MS** -266 students
  - **Rock Springs MS** -222 students
  - **Rockvale MS** -221 students

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Middle School Concept 2

Rutherford County Schools

2026/27 Middle School Zones Concept #2 (DRAFT)

Legend

- District Boundary
- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Magnet Schools
- Alternative Schools
- Charter Schools
- Airport
- Cemetery
- College
- Nissan Plant
- Parks and Golf Course
- Current 26/27 Middle School Boundary
- School Property

Middle Schools:

26. Blackman
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8. Eagleville
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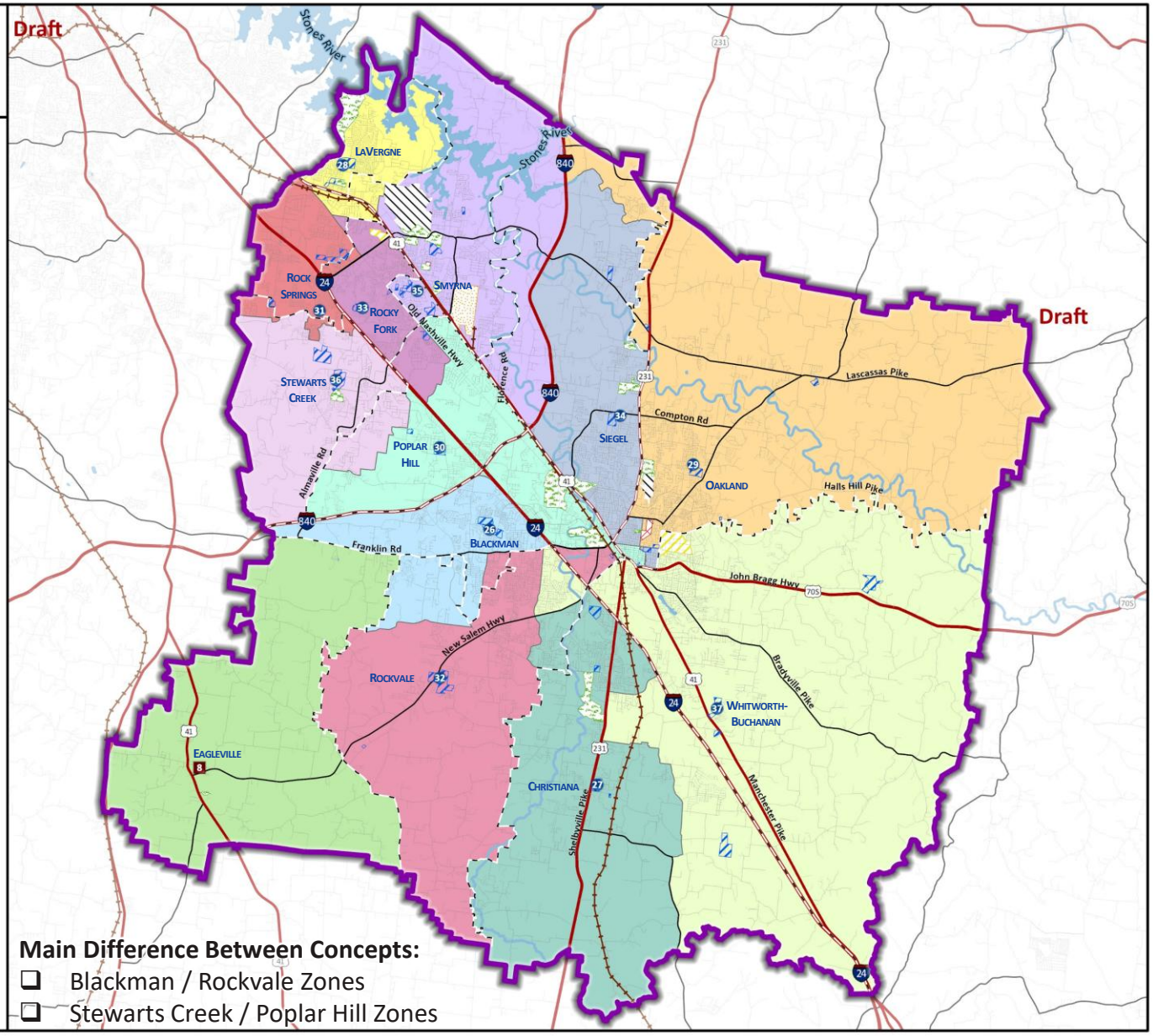
31. Rock Springs
32. Rockvale
33. Rocky Fork
34. Siegel
35. Smyrna
36. Stewarts Creek
37. Whitworth-Buchanan



Overview of Proposed Changes:

- ❑ Downtown core area aligned to High School zone changes

Northwest → Southeast Shifts:

- ❑ LaVergne extends south
- ❑ Rock Springs extends south
- ❑ Smyrna extends south
- ❑ Stewarts Creek extends south
- ❑ Poplar Hill extends along I-24
- ❑ Blackman extends south of Franklin Rd, west of Rucker Lane
- ❑ Christiana extends west to Cason Lan
- ❑ Whitworth-Buchanan extends west

0 2.5 5 Miles

Map data provided by Rutherford County Schools, Cities of Eagleville, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, and Smyrna, Rutherford County, State of Tennessee, and ESRI/GIS.
Map created by RSP & Associates in November 2025.

Main Difference Between Concepts:

- ❑ Blackman / Rockvale Zones
- ❑ Stewarts Creek / Poplar Hill Zones

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Middle School Concept 2 Projections (Hybrid Reside)

Hybrid Reside Zone Projections (residing students with special program students removed)

Concept 2 Middle School Zones:	Capacity	Primary Focus 2026/27	Primary Focus 2027/28	Future Planning 2028/29	Future Planning 2029/30	Future Planning 2030/31	2027/28 Utilization
Blackman Middle	1,568	1,391	1,543	1,647	1,562	1,480	98%
Christiana Middle	1,108	1,105	1,115	1,131	1,083	1,079	101%
Eagleville Middle	308	241	247	227	227	220	80%
LaVergne Middle	1,400	1,187	1,238	1,345	1,348	1,342	88%
Oakland Middle	1,440	1,426	1,423	1,410	1,370	1,359	99%
Poplar Hill Middle	1,200	1,035	1,089	1,149	1,147	1,168	91%
Rock Springs Middle	1,109	972	1,104	1,266	1,317	1,386	100%
Rockvale Middle	1,470	1,371	1,391	1,343	1,380	1,434	95%
Rocky Fork Middle	1,075	1,014	1,050	1,090	1,047	1,035	98%
Siegel Middle	1,107	988	1,010	983	1,003	992	91%
Smyrna Middle	1,200	984	1,086	1,133	1,144	1,130	91%
Stewarts Creek Middle	1,077	860	950	1,027	1,095	1,221	88%
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	1,075	1,073	1,053	1,074	1,112	1,104	98%
Middle School (6-8) Total:	15,137	13,647	14,299	14,825	14,834	14,950	94%

School Utilization Legend
Over 100% School Capacity
Under 70% School Capacity

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025 11/11/2025

Note: Total projections may differ from enrollment report due to rounding at the school and student level.
Eagleville capacity is estimated based on dividing the K-12 total by the number of grades at each grade level (ES, MS, HS).

IMPORTANT: By 2028/29 to 2030/31 additional middle school capacity is needed to fully address challenges.

FAST FACTS – Primary Focus Years:

- Blackman reduced to less than 1,600 students
- Christiana reduced to less than 1,150 students
- Poplar Hill reduced to less than 1,200 students
- Rockvale reduced to less than 1,400 students
- Rocky Fork, Siegel, and Smyrna increased but still slightly under capacity
- Achieves more of the primary challenges at the middle school level than in Concept 1

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Middle School Concept 2: Neighborhood and Growth Impact

Concept 2: RSP Planning Area Name:	Current Zone	Proposed Zone	Growth Timing	Current Units	Potential Units	Student Totals: Current	Student Totals: Year 5
Gazebo Park Estates	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	380	0	34	35
Cimarron	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	350	0	24	28
Kingsbury	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	158	7	23	37
Everwood at the Avenue	Blackman MS	Poplar Hill MS	No	336	0	23	21
South of Buchanan Estates	Christiana MS	W-Buchanan MS	Current	259	606	24	52
Buchanan Estates Section 3	Christiana MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	389	0	39	56
Wilston	Oakland MS	Siegel MS	No	569	0	32	33
Veterans Landing	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	Current	1	43	25	31
Homewood Park-Belle Meade	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	497	0	32	36
Rosemont	Poplar Hill MS	Rocky Fork MS	No	122	0	25	22
Center Hill and Eastwood	Rock Springs MS	LaVergne MS	No	535	0	66	85
Clarkwood	Rockvale MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	747	0	52	51
Burgess Estates/ Cason Grove	Rockvale MS	W-Buchanan MS	No	1,003	0	63	94
Fairwood Estates	Rockvale MS	Blackman MS	No	403	2	34	30
Cedar Grove Villas	Rocky Fork MS	Rock Springs MS	Current	332	49	20	31
Grand Oak at Town Park Apts	Rocky Fork MS	Rock Springs MS	No	300	0	14	23
Stoneridge Farms	Rocky Fork MS	Rock Springs MS	No	336	0	38	40
Cascade Falls and Chapel Hills	Siegel MS	Oakland MS	No	1,122	32	92	82
Miles Farm Estates	Siegel MS	Smyrna MS	No	197	0	23	21
Heritage Valley	Smyrna MS	LaVergne MS	No	755	0	109	132
Woodmount	Stewarts Creek MS	Rock Springs MS	Current	486	42	115	201
Mcfarlin Pointe	Stewarts Creek MS	Rock Springs MS	No	340	0	27	35

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Shift of Potential Housing Units by Zone:	CONCEPT 2: Loss	Gain	Net
Blackman Middle	-959	352	**-607**
Christiana Middle	-2,093	178	**-1,915**
Eagleville Middle	0	0	**0**
LaVergne Middle	0	0	**0**
Oakland Middle	-755	364	**-391**
Poplar Hill Middle	-43	1,619	**1,576**
Rock Springs Middle	0	321	**321**
Rockvale Middle	-1,113	0	**-1,113**
Rocky Fork Middle	-49	43	**-6**
Siegel Middle	-552	95	**-457**
Smyrna Middle	0	188	**188**
Stewarts Creek Middle	-272	0	**-272**
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	0	2,676	**2,676**

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

There is a significant northwest → southeast restructuring, with many neighborhoods shifting toward Poplar Hill, Rocky Fork MS, and Whitworth-Buchanan MS to rebalance enrollment.

Schools with Largest Net Changes:

- **Increase in Potential Units:**
  - **Whitworth-Buchanan MS** +2,676 units
  - **Poplar Hill MS** +1,576 units
  - **Rock Springs MS** +321 units
- **Net Increase in Projected Students (Yr 5):**
  - **Whitworth-Buchanan MS** +396 students
  - **Rock Springs MS** +258 students
  - **LaVergne MS** +228 students
- **Net Decrease in Students:**
  - **Stewarts Creek MS** -263 students
  - **Blackman MS** -229 students
  - **Rockvale MS** -242 students

DISCLAIMER: Table is not an all-encompassing list of zone changes. Table capture the RSP planning areas that moved with more than 20 students projected to reside there.

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6-8th Grade Murfreesboro City Schools Analysis

Tables captures the percent of current 6-8th grade students served in the district that are assigned to each middle school that reside in the Murfreesboro City Schools boundary

Concept 1 School Zone:	Current 6-8 Students living in City Schools Boundary	Percent Share City School Students
Blackman Middle	243	10%
Oakland Middle	728	31%
Rockvale Middle	359	15%
Siegel Middle	525	22%
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	483	21%

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Concept 1:

- Oakland serves 31% of middle school students living in the city schools boundary
- Siegel and Whitworth-Buchanan serve the next greatest share with 21-22%

Concept 2 School Zone:	Current 6-8 Students living in City School Bnd	Percent Share City School Students
Blackman Middle	27	1%
Oakland Middle	695	30%
Poplar Hill Middle	36	2%
Rockvale Middle	541	23%
Siegel Middle	556	24%
Whitworth-Buchanan Middle	483	21%

Source: Rutherford County Schools and RSP, November 2025

Concept 2:

- Oakland serves 30% of middle school students living in the city schools boundary
- Rockvale, Siegel, and Whitworth-Buchanan serve the next greatest share with 21-24%

Note:
Murfreesboro City Schools students make decisions of when they come into Rutherford County Schools:

- ❑ 5th grade
- ❑ 6th grade
- ❑ 7th grade
- ❑ Another school choice

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Discussion and Questions:

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RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO REPEAL THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS' COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCING ACT

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Tennessee General Assembly enacted the Professional Educators' Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA), found in Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 5, Part 6; and

WHEREAS, PECCA replaced the former collective bargaining framework with a system of "collaborative conferencing"; and

WHEREAS, while the intent of PECCA was to create a statutory process for communication between local boards of education and teachers on matters of employment, in practice the law has resulted in significant administrative burdens and legal disputes; and

WHEREAS, PECCA has created a framework that often fosters conflict rather than collaboration, as it was intended to do; and

WHEREAS, other local school districts across Tennessee have incurred legal expenses due to lawsuits that arise from the implementation and varying interpretations of PECCA; and

WHEREAS, legal disputes involving PECCA demonstrate both the limited enforceability of the law and the reality that districts incur unnecessary litigation costs without producing meaningful gains for employees; and

WHEREAS, failure to agree on terms leaves issues unresolved and contributes to frustration, mistrust, and potential litigation; and

WHEREAS, even when agreements are reached through PECCA, the resulting memoranda of understanding are only binding if approved by the Board of Education, demonstrating that the process offers limited practical benefit and has not produced meaningful gains for employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rutherford County Board of Education requests that the Tennessee General Assembly repeal the Professional Educators' Collaborative Conferencing Act (PECCA) in its entirety.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

By:_____
Claire Maxwell, Chairman

ATTESTED TO:

_____
Dawn Williams, Secretary

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REAL ESTATE PURCHASE AGREEMENT
(300 Maple Street, Smyrna, Tennessee)

THIS AGREEMENT is made as of the 1st day of December, 2025 ("Effective Date"), between the Estate of Jane Holmes ("Seller"), and the Rutherford County Board of Education ("Buyer").

Background

Buyer wishes to purchase property owned by Seller located at 300 Maple Street, Smyrna, Rutherford County, Tennessee consisting of approximately .921 acres, more or less, further identified as Parcel No. 027I-D-017.00-000 in the Office of the Rutherford County Property Assessor, and as generally depicted on Exhibit "A", together with all trade names, franchises, licenses, permits, development rights and approvals, deposits, credits, petroleum and mineral interests and royalties, water rights and other intangibles owned or utilized by or for the benefit of Seller in connection therewith (the "Property").

Seller wishes to sell the Property to Buyer;

In consideration of the mutual agreements herein, and other good and valuable consideration, including the sum of Ten Dollars ($10.00) paid to Seller by Buyer, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, Seller agrees to sell to Buyer and Buyer agrees to purchase the Property from Seller, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. PURCHASE PRICE, PAYMENT, SURVEY

1.1 Purchase Price; Payment. The total Purchase Price shall be Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars ($750,000.00). The Purchase Price shall be paid in cash at closing.

1.2 Earnest Money Deposit. An earnest money deposit in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000) ("Earnest Money Deposit") shall be deposited with Escrow Agent by Buyer within three (3) business days after the Effective Date. All deposits made as earnest money shall be deemed included within the meaning of the term Earnest Money Deposit for all purposes. The Earnest Money Deposit shall be held as specifically provided in this Agreement and shall be applied to the Purchase Price at Closing.

1.3 Prorations. Ad valorem taxes and matters of income and expense, if any, and other items customarily prorated in transactions of this kind shall be prorated as of midnight of the day preceding the Closing Date. In the event the Property has been assessed for property tax purposes at such rates or with exemptions that would result in additional taxes and assessments for prior tax years or for the Closing tax year being assessed because of supplemental taxes resulting from delayed assessments or other causes, including without limitation Buyer's change in land usage or the change in ownership of the Property attributable to Buyer's acquisition of the Property (known variously as "rollback", "agricultural recoupment" or "school board revaluation" taxes), Seller shall pay all such taxes and assessments when due, prorated as of midnight of the day preceding the Closing Date.

1.4 Closing Costs.

(a) Seller shall pay:

(1) For the costs to prepare the Warranty Deed; and

(2) Seller's attorneys' fees.

(b) Buyer shall pay:

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(1) Any transfer taxes on the deed;

(2) The costs of the title insurance;

(3) The costs of any Phase I environmental site assessment to be obtained by Buyer, if any;

(4) The costs of a Survey of the Property;

(5) The costs of recording the deed; and

(6) Buyer's attorneys' fees.

2. INSPECTION PERIOD AND CLOSING

2.1 Inspection Period. Buyer shall have an Inspection Period which begins on the next business day following the date upon which the Agreement, fully executed by Seller, Buyer and Escrow Agent, has been received by Buyer (the "Effective Date") and ends at midnight sixty (60) days later ("Inspection Period"). Buyer shall have the Inspection Period within which to physically inspect the Property, to conduct its due diligence and to inspect all books, records and accounts of Seller related thereto. Buyer and Buyer's officers, employees, consultants, attorneys and other authorized representatives, shall have the right to reasonable access to the Property and to all records of Seller related thereto (including without limitation title information, surveys, environmental assessment reports and other information concerning the condition of the Property), at reasonable times during the Inspection Period for the purpose of inspecting the Property, taking soil and ground water samples, conducting hazardous materials and wetlands inspections, tests and assessments, reviewing the books and records of Seller concerning the Property and otherwise conducting its due diligence review of the Property. Buyer hereby agrees to indemnify and hold Seller harmless from any damages, liabilities or claims for property damage or personal injury and mechanics or construction liens caused or created by Buyer and its agents and contractors in the conduct of such inspections and investigations, other than pre-existing conditions merely discovered by Buyer or its agents or contractors. Buyer will restore Seller's property to a clean and level condition after any studies, testing or inspections Buyer has performed on the Property, and shall repair any damage cause by said studies, testing or inspections. Seller shall cooperate with and assist Buyer in making such inspections and reviews. Seller shall make available to Buyer such of the foregoing as may be in Seller's possession in order to facilitate Buyer's due diligence. Seller shall give Buyer any authorizations which may be required by Buyer in order to gain access to records or other information pertaining to the Property or the use thereof maintained by any third party, governmental or quasi-governmental authorities or organizations. The indemnities contained in this section shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

2.2 Buyer's Termination Right. Within the Inspection Period, Buyer may, in its sole discretion, for any reason or for no reason, elect whether or not to proceed with closing under this Agreement, which election shall be made by written notice to proceed to Seller given within the Inspection Period. If such notice is not timely given, this Agreement and all rights, duties and obligations of Buyer and Seller hereunder, except any which expressly survive termination, shall terminate, whereupon Escrow Agent shall forthwith return to Buyer the Earnest Money Deposit. If such notice to proceed is timely given to Seller, this Agreement and all rights, duties and obligations of Buyer and Seller hereunder (including without limitation their respective obligations to close the transaction), shall, subject to the terms and conditions hereof, become fully binding and the Earnest Money Deposit shall become nonrefundable except for the failure of a closing condition or the default of Seller hereunder.

2.3 Time and Place of Closing. The Closing shall take place at the offices of Escrow Agent at 10:00 A.M. no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the Inspection Period.

3. WARRANTIES, REPRESENTATIONS AND COVENANTS OF SELLER

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Seller warrants and represents as follows as of the date of this Agreement and as of the Closing and where indicated covenants and agrees as follows:

3.1 Title. Seller is the owner in fee simple of all of the Property.

3.2 Eminent Domain/Condemnation. No condemnation or eminent domain proceedings are now pending or threatened concerning the Property, and Seller has received no notice from any governmental agency or authority or other potential condemnor concerning any right-of-way, utility or other taking which may affect the Property.

3.3 Environmental Matters. To the best of Seller's knowledge the Property does not now contain nor has the Property contained any underground storage tanks, material amounts of hazardous material or landfills. Seller has used no hazardous material at the Property nor has Seller permitted any other person to do so. To the best of Seller's knowledge the Property contains no vegetation, animal species or significant historic/archaeological sites which are subject to special regulations or limitations under local, state or federal laws, regulations or orders.

3.4 Foreign Investment and Real Property Tax Act. Seller is not a "foreign person" within the meaning of Section 1445 of the Internal Revenue Code, or under any comparable state statutes which are applicable to this transaction. At Closing Seller will execute and deliver to Buyer an affidavit regarding such matters. If Seller fails to execute and deliver such affidavit, Buyer may deduct and withhold from the Purchase Price such amounts as Buyer may be required to withhold in order to satisfy any of Buyer's tax withholding obligations under such statutes or regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

4. POSSESSION; RISK OF LOSS

4.1 Possession. Possession of the Property will be transferred to Buyer at the conclusion of the Closing.

4.2 Risk of Loss. All risk of loss to the Property shall remain upon Seller until the conclusion of the Closing. If, before Closing, any material portion of the Property is damaged by casualty, or if any material portion of the Property is taken or threatened by eminent domain, or if there is a material obstruction of access by virtue of a taking by eminent domain, Seller shall, within ten (10) days of such damage or taking, notify Buyer thereof and Buyer shall have the option to:

(a) terminate this Agreement upon notice to Seller given within ten (10) business days after such notice from Seller, in which case Buyer shall receive a return of the Earnest Money Deposit; or

(b) proceed with the purchase of the Property, in which event Seller shall assign to Buyer all Seller's right, title and interest in all amounts due or collected by Seller under applicable insurance policies or as condemnation awards. In such event, the Purchase Price shall be reduced by the amount of any insurance deductible to the extent it reduces the insurance proceeds payable.

4.3 USA Patriot Act.

(a) None of the funds to be used for payment by Buyer of the Purchase Price will be subject to 18 U.S.C. §§ 1956-1957 (Laundering of Money Instruments), 18 U.S.C. §§ 981-986 (Federal Asset Forfeiture), 18 U.S.C. §§ 881 (Drug Property Seizure), Executive Order Number 13224 on Terrorism Financing, effective September 24, 2001, or the United and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001, H.R. 3162, Public Law 107-56 (the "US Patriot Act").

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(b) Buyer is not, and will not become, a person or entity with whom U.S. persons are restricted from doing business with under the regulations of the Office of Foreign Asset Control ("OFAC") of the Department of Treasury (including those named on OFAC's Specially Designated and Blocked Persons list) or under any statute, executive order (including the September 24, 2001 Executive Order Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions With Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism), the USA Patriot Act, or other governmental action.

5. TITLE MATTERS

Within ten (10) days after the Effective Date, Seller shall deliver to Buyer's counsel copies of any title information, including prior title policies and surveys, in Seller's possession. During the Inspection Period Buyer may order a title insurance commitment from a national title insurance company acceptable to it and a current survey from a reputable surveyor. Buyer will have thirty (30) business days after its receipt of both the title insurance commitment and survey within which to notify Seller in writing of any conditions, defects, encroachments or other objections to title or survey which are not acceptable to Buyer. Any matter disclosed by the title insurance commitment (other than liens removable by the payment of money) or by the survey which is not timely specified in Buyer's written notice to Seller shall be deemed a "Permitted Exception". Seller shall use reasonable and diligent efforts to cure all objections to title or survey by Closing. If such title defects and/or objections are not cured within said period, Buyer may (i) refuse to purchase the Property, terminate this Agreement and receive a return of the Earnest Money Deposit; or (ii) waive such objection(s) and close the purchase of the Property subject to them.

6. CONDITIONS PRECEDENT

6.1 Conditions Precedent to Buyer's Obligations. The obligations of Buyer under this Agreement are subject to satisfaction or written waiver by Buyer of each of the following conditions or requirements on or before the Closing Date:

(a) The title insurance commitment shall have been issued and updated through Closing, subject only to Permitted Exceptions.

(b) The physical and environmental condition of the Property shall not have materially changed from the Effective Date, ordinary wear and tear excepted.

(c) Buyer must be able to extend water, sewer and electric utilities to the boundary of the Property with adequate capacity for Buyer's proposed use of the Property.

(d) Approval of the purchase of the Property and funding for the purchase of the same by the Rutherford County Commission and Rutherford County Board of Education.

(e) Buyer shall have received the following in form reasonably satisfactory to Buyer:

(1) A warranty deed in proper form for recording, duly executed, witnessed and acknowledged, and insured by the title insurance company, so as to convey to Buyer the fee simple title to the Property, subject only to the Permitted Exceptions; and

(2) An owner's affidavit, non-foreign affidavit and such further instruments of conveyance, transfer and assignment and other documents as may reasonably be required by the title insurance company in order to effectuate the provisions of this Agreement and the consummation of the transactions contemplated herein; and

(3) Such other documents as Buyer or the title insurance company may reasonably request to effect the transactions contemplated by this Agreement.

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If any of the above contingencies are not satisfied to Buyer's satisfaction within Buyer's sole discretion, the Buyer may elect to either: (1) terminate this Agreement and receive a full refund of the Earnest Money Deposit; or (2 waive the contingency and proceed to closing.

6.2 Conditions Precedent to Seller's Obligations. The obligations of Seller under this Agreement are subject to Buyer having delivered to Seller at or prior to the Closing the balance of the Purchase Price and such other documents as Seller or the title insurance company may reasonably request to effect the transactions contemplated by this Agreement.

7. BREACH; REMEDIES

7.1 Breach by Seller. In the event of a breach of Seller's covenants or warranties herein and the failure of Seller to cure such breach within the time provided for Closing, Buyer may, at Buyer's election (i) terminate this Agreement and receive a return of the Earnest Money Deposit, and the parties shall have no further rights or obligations under this Agreement (except as survive termination); (ii) enforce this Agreement by suit for specific performance; or (iii) waive such breach and close the purchase contemplated hereby, notwithstanding such breach..

7.2 Breach by Buyer. In the event of a breach of Buyer's covenants or warranties herein and the failure of Buyer to cure such breach within the time provided for Closing, Seller's sole legal and equitable remedy shall be to terminate this Agreement and retain Buyer's Earnest Money Deposit as AGREED LIQUIDATED DAMAGES for such breach, and upon payment in full to Seller of such Earnest Money Deposit, the parties shall have no further rights, claims, liabilities or obligations under this Agreement (except as survive termination). *BUYER AND SELLER AGREE THAT IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL AND EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE THE DAMAGES SUFFERED BY SELLER AS A RESULT OF BUYER'S FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY PURSUANT TO THIS AGREEMENT, AND THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES EXISTING AS OF THE DATE OF THIS AGREEMENT, THE LIQUIDATED DAMAGES PROVIDED FOR IN THIS SECTION REPRESENT A REASONABLE ESTIMATE OF THE DAMAGES WHICH SELLER WILL INCUR AS A RESULT OF SUCH FAILURE. THEREFORE, BUYER AND SELLER DO HEREBY AGREE THAT A REASONABLE ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL NET DETRIMENT THAT SELLER WOULD SUFFER IN THE EVENT THAT BUYER DEFAULTS AND FAILS TO COMPLETE THE PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY IS AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (WHICH INCLUDES ANY ACCRUED INTEREST THEREON). SAID AMOUNT WILL BE THE FULL, AGREED AND LIQUIDATED DAMAGES FOR THE BREACH OF THIS AGREEMENT BY BUYER. THE PAYMENT OF SUCH AMOUNT AS LIQUIDATED DAMAGES IS NOT INTENDED AS A FORFEITURE OR PENALTY, BUT IS INTENDED TO CONSTITUTE LIQUIDATED DAMAGES TO SELLER.*

8. MISCELLANEOUS

8.1 Commissions. Seller and Buyer represent and warrant to each other that they have not dealt with any real estate agent or broker in connection with this Agreement other than Jackson Zeitlin who represents Seller and will be paid pursuant to a separate agreement. Seller and Buyer covenant and agree to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the other from and against any claim for any broker's commission or similar fee or compensation claimed by any party for any service rendered on behalf of Seller or Buyer in connection with the sale and purchase of the Property other than Jackson Zeitlin.

8.2 Notices. All notices and demands of any kind which either party may be required or may desire to serve upon the other party in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing, signed by the party or its counsel identified below, and shall be served (as an alternative to personal service) by registered or certified mail, overnight courier service or facsimile transmission (followed promptly by personal service or mailing of a hard copy), at the addresses set forth below:

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As to Seller:	The Estate of Jane Holmes 101 Seward St. (No P.O. Boxes) Smyrna, TN, 37167 Telephone: Email: holmescatering1@gmail.com
As to Buyer:	Rutherford County Board of Education Attn: James Sullivan 2240 Southgate Blvd. Murfreesboro, TN 37128
With a copy to Buyer's Counsel:	Jeff Reed 16 Public Square North Murfreesboro, TN 37130 Telephone: (615) 893-5522 Facsimile: (615) 849-2135 Email: jreed@mborolaw.com
With a copy to Escrow Agent: (if required)	Hudson, Reed & Christiansen, PLLC 16 Public Square North Murfreesboro, TN 37130 Telephone: (615) 893-5522 Facsimile: (615) 849-2135

Any such notice or demand so served, shall constitute proper notice hereunder upon delivery to the United States Postal Service or to such overnight courier, or by confirmation of the facsimile transmission.

8.3 Time. Time is of the essence of this Agreement, provided that if any date upon which some action, notice or response is required of any party hereunder occurs on a weekend, state holiday, or national holiday, such action, notice or response shall not be required until the next succeeding business day.

8.4 Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the state in which the Property is located.

8.5 Successors and Assigns. The terms and provisions of this Agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, successors and permitted assigns of the parties. The Buyer may assign Buyer's rights and obligations under this Agreement to Rutherford County. Except as to Rutherford County, no third parties, including any brokers or creditors, shall be beneficiaries hereof or entitled to any rights or benefits hereunder.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the day and year first above written.

"BUYER"

RUTHERFORD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

By:_____
Claire D. Maxwell, Chairman

"SELLER"

THE ESTATE OF JANE HOLMES

By: Michael Holmes dotloop verified 12/01/25 3:34 PM CST EOA2-NLTQ-4RPQ-MCTY

Title: Michael Holmes - Beneficiary

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JOINDER OF ESCROW AGENT

1. Duties. Escrow Agent joins herein for the purpose of agreeing to comply with the terms hereof insofar as they apply to Escrow Agent. Escrow Agent shall receive and hold the Earnest Money Deposit in trust, to be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of this joinder and the foregoing Agreement.

2. Indemnity. Escrow Agent shall not be liable to any party except for claims resulting from the negligence or willful misconduct of Escrow Agent. If the escrow is the subject of any controversy or litigation, the parties to the Agreement shall jointly and severally indemnify and hold Escrow Agent harmless from and against any and all loss, cost, damage, liability or expense, including costs of reasonable attorneys' fees to which Escrow Agent may be put or which Escrow Agent may incur by reason of or in connection with such controversy or litigation, except to the extent it is determined that such controversy or litigation resulted from Escrow Agent's negligence or willful misconduct. If the indemnity amounts payable hereunder result from the fault of Buyer or Seller (or their respective agents), the party at fault shall pay and hold the other party harmless against such amounts.

3. Conflicting Demands. If conflicting demands are made upon Escrow Agent or if Escrow Agent is uncertain with respect to the escrow, the parties to the Agreement expressly agree that Escrow Agent shall have the absolute right to do either or both of the following: (i) withhold and stop all proceedings in performance of this escrow and await settlement of the controversy by final appropriate legal proceedings or otherwise as it may require; or (ii) file suit for declaratory relief and/or interpleader and obtain an order from the court requiring the parties to interplead and litigate in such court their several claims and rights between themselves. Upon the filing of any such declaratory relief or interpleader suit and tender of the Earnest Money Deposit to the court, Escrow Agent shall thereupon be fully released and discharged from any and all obligations to further perform the duties or obligations imposed upon it. Buyer and Seller agree to respond promptly in writing to any request by Escrow Agent for clarification, consent or instructions. Any action proposed to be taken by Escrow Agent for which approval of Buyer and/or Seller is requested shall be considered approved by the particular party if Escrow Agent does not receive written notice of disapproval within five (5) business days after a written request for approval is received by the party whose approval is being requested. Escrow Agent shall not be required to take any action for which approval of Buyer and/or Seller has been sought unless such approval has been received. No notice by Buyer or Seller to Escrow Agent of disapproval of a proposed action shall affect the right of Escrow Agent to take any action as to which such approval is not required.

4. Tax Identification. Seller and Buyer shall provide to Escrow Agent appropriate Federal tax identification numbers.

5. Continuing Counsel. Seller acknowledges that Escrow Agent is counsel to Buyer herein and Seller agrees that in the event of a dispute hereunder or otherwise between Seller and Buyer, Escrow Agent may continue to represent Buyer notwithstanding that it is acting and will continue to act as Escrow Agent hereunder, it being acknowledged by all parties that Escrow Agent's duties hereunder are ministerial in nature.

HUDSON, REED & CHRISTIANSEN, PLLC

By:_____
Its Authorized Agent

Date:_____

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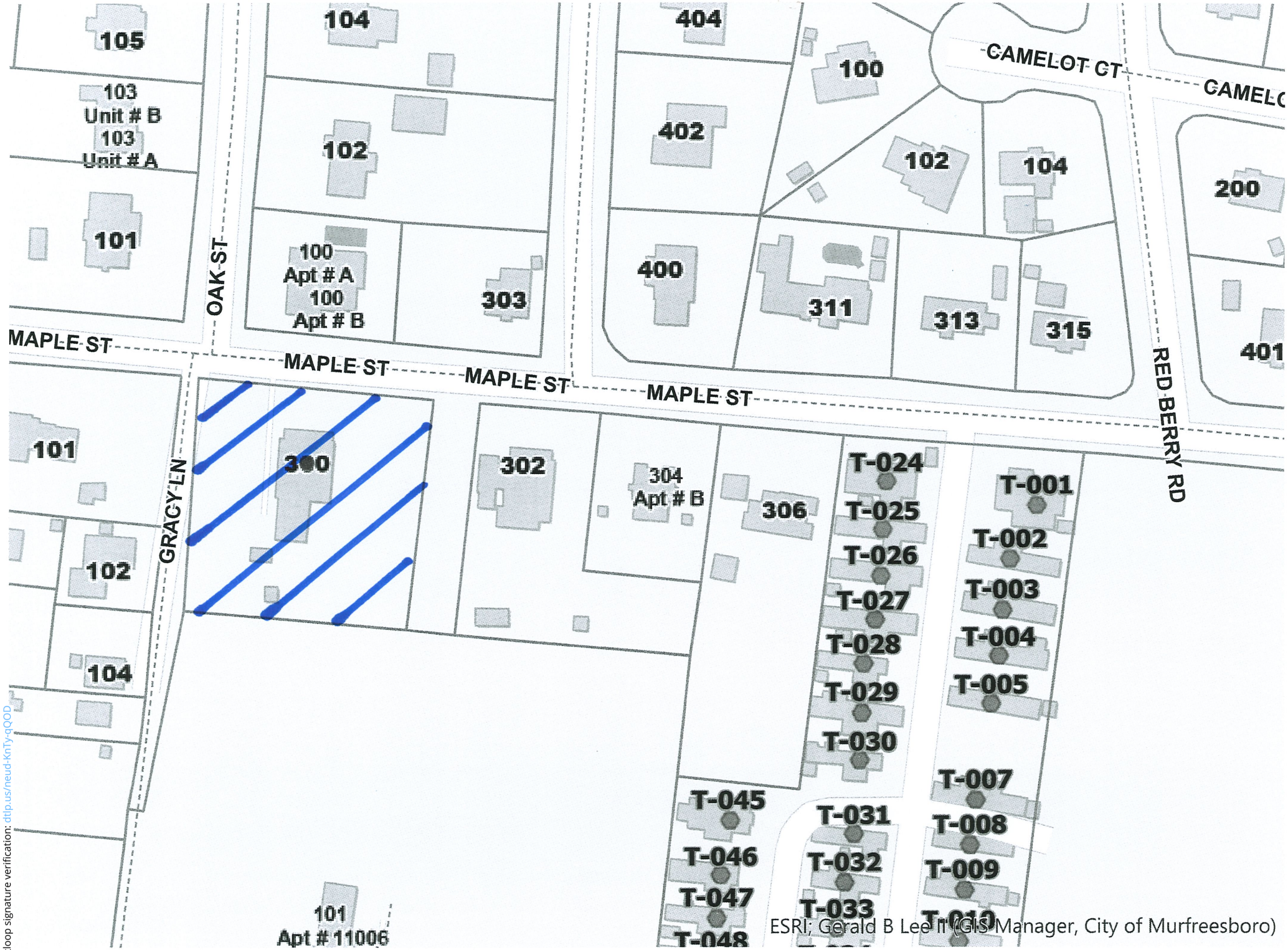
EXHIBIT “A”



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institute for multi-sensory education

Contract Agreement

This contract, agreed to on October 9, 2025, is between IMSE, whose address is 2000 Town Center, Suite 2000, Southfield, MI 48075, and the Rutherford County Schools, whose address is 2240 Southpark Drive, Murfreesboro, TN 37128.

Orton-Gillingham Plus Training (30-hour)

The Orton-Gillingham Plus Course is an interactive, hands-on training that provides educators with a deep understanding of IMSE's enhanced Orton-Gillingham program. This accredited Structured Literacy course equips teachers with the knowledge, strategies, and tools necessary to effectively implement IMSE's foundational literacy skills curriculum across all instructional tiers.
The OG+ Course is ideal for teachers working with emergent and beginning readers, as well as those supporting students who continue to develop word recognition skills.

Teachers will receive training with respect to:

- Phonemic awareness
- Multi-sensory strategies for reading, writing, and spelling
- Syllabication patterns for encoding/decoding
- Multi-sensory techniques for irregular words
- Student assessment techniques
- Guidelines for weekly lesson plans
- Asynchronous fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension

Materials Provided by IMSE:

- *OG+ Training Kit Materials (each participant will choose one)*
    - *Kindergarten*
    - *1st Grade*
    - *2nd Grade*
    - *OG+ Lift-Intervention*

Participants will need to bring the following supplies to the first day of training:

- Sticky notes
- Highlighter

Unless expressly authorized by IMSE in writing, in no event shall all or any part of the training be videotaped or recorded.

Training Cost

The minimum number of participants is 10.
For in-person training, the maximum number of participants is 64.

10-29 participants per person rate	*10-29 participants per person rate*	*30-64 participants per person rate*	*30-64 participants per person rate*
K, 1, 2, 3	*OG+ Lift (Intervention)*	*K, 1, 2, 3*	*OG+ Lift (Intervention)*
$1,350	*$1,575*	*$1,275*	*$1,487.50*

Instructor In-Person Fee: $4,500
The per-person rate includes tuition, materials and shipping. The instructor's travel fee is a separate expense. Materials are provided only for participants attending the training dates listed on the last page of the agreement. The district will be billed according to the above schedule.

Unused Supplies
Districts can use any complete training kits by registering teachers for virtual training within 3 months of the last scheduled day of the district's training. Contact your IMSE Representative to register a participant for training.

Please note the grade-level-specific training kit when registering the new participant. The participant and the grade-level training kit must match to not incur fees. If the new participant doesn't match the grade-level training kit, a new kit must be shipped. The new participant will receive a voucher to attend a future IMSE Training. The district will incur the following fees:

- **Cost of training kit**
- **Re-registration of $200/participant**

Morphology Plus (30-hour)

A thorough, engaging and session designed for teachers who teach third grade through fifth grade and any grade whose students require intervention in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers will gain a deep understanding of the role morphology plays in spelling and vocabulary. Teachers will also gain understanding of how to implement fluency and comprehension.

Teachers will receive training with respect to:

- Advanced understanding of Morphemes
- Lesson planning
- Greek and Latin Bases
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension

Materials Provided by IMSE:

- *Morphology Plus Manual by IMSE*
- *Morphology Teacher Guides (4) by IMSE*
- *Morphology Plus Student Passages (3 PDFs) by IMSE*
- *The Comprehension Blueprint by Nancy Hennessey*
- *Vocabulary Handbook by Linda Diamond and Linda Gutlohn*
- *IMSE Morpheme Card Pack*
- *Morphology Plus Practice Packet*
- *Procedural Routine Flip Chart*
- *Dry-Erase Paddle Board*
- *IMSE's Writing and Grammar Manual, practice packet, and webinar*
- *IMSE's Asynchronous Video for Encoding and Decoding Red Words*
- *Digital copy of Spelling 3rd Grade Plus Teachers Guide*

Participants will need to bring the following supplies to the first day of training:

- Highlighters: yellow, green, purple, pink, blue
- Sticky notes
- Computer, smartphone, or iPad to look up research

Unless expressly authorized by IMSE in writing, in no event shall all or any part of the training be videotaped or recorded.

Training Cost

The minimum number of participants is 10.
For in-person training, the maximum number of participants is 64.

10-29 participants per person rate	*30-64 participants per person rate*
$1,350	*$1,275*

Instructor In-Person Fee: $4,500

The per-person rate includes tuition, materials and shipping. The instructor travel fee is a separate expense. Materials are provided only for participants attending the training dates listed on the last page of the agreement. The district will be billed according to the above schedule.

Unused Supplies
Districts can use any complete training kits by registering teachers for virtual training within 3 months of the last scheduled day of the district's training. Contact your IMSE Representative to register a participant for training.

The new participant will receive a voucher to attend a future IMSE Training. The district will incur a re-registration fee of $200/participant.

Confirmation of Training
IMSE requires the following no less than **45 days** before the scheduled training date.

- Signed contract
- Purchase Order
- Completed Logistics Form
- List of participants' names, emails and grade-level training supply kit choice
- Confirmed final numbers

The district's training date(s) is not guaranteed until these documents are completed. In the event that the participant count does not meet the minimum, the training is subject to cancellation.

Cancellation Policy
IMSE requires a $2,500 cancellation fee if the School or District cancels or reschedules the training within 45 days or less of the training start date.

Effective March 20, 2025, IMSE is implementing a revised cancellation policy to better support our valued school partners. We understand that unforeseen funding cuts can disrupt planned professional development initiatives. As a gesture of goodwill, IMSE will waive all cancellation fees for trainings that must be canceled due to budget constraints.

We kindly request that you notify us of any cancellations due to funding cuts as soon as possible. We would appreciate a 45-day notice period to facilitate rescheduling and resource allocation. Please communicate any changes in your training plans promptly to ensure a smooth and collaborative experience.

IMSE remains committed to providing high-quality professional development opportunities for educators. We value our partnerships with schools and strive to be flexible and accommodating in the face of unexpected challenges. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy update, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Express Shipping Fees
IMSE will prepare and ship training materials based on the agreed number of participants provided at least 45 days before the start date. Additional participants are welcome; however, IMSE must be notified no less than 15 business days before the training start date, or express processing /shipping fees shall apply. The district will be charged $100 per extra added participant kit if it is **15** business days or less before the training date.

A valid purchase order (new or revised) is required in order to ship any additional training kits for added participants.

Make-Up Policy
Participants are only eligible to get up to 6 hours (two videos) of digital makeup days for $100.

Participants will not be allowed to make up more than 6 hours via video, any missed day beyond one will incur a $150 fee per day.

They can only make up a day live if they pay a $150 fee (per day).

The Institute for Multi-Sensory Education reserves the right to cancel. If IMSE must cancel, 100% of the training fee will be refunded.

While IMSE makes every effort to conduct professional learning events on the advertised dates and locations, they are subject to change without prior notice. IMSE reserves the right to change or cancel a professional development event due to low enrollment or factors beyond our control. We will attempt to notify registrants to limit customer inconvenience, but we are not liable for any expenses incurred.

Intellectual Property
IMSE provides various training and related materials, supplements, information, quizzes, tests, questions, articles, and other information including, but not limited to, *OG Plus Manual, OG Plus Teacher Guides, Syllable Division Word Book, Spelling Teacher's Guide (3rd Grade Plus),* and *Phoneme/Grapheme Card Pack* (the "Materials"). IMSE authorizes the School/School District to utilize the Materials in connection with the training and for use in the classroom only.

Unless expressly authorized by IMSE, the Materials shall not be copied or reproduced in any fashion. Further, the School/School District shall not modify the Materials in any way or reproduce, share, distribute or utilize them to perform unauthorized trainings.

The School/School District acknowledges that IMSE owns certain trademarks and copyrights hereinafter referred to as the "Intellectual Property."

The Intellectual Property includes all trademark registrations and unregistered trademark usages of IMSE, Reading Venture One LLC, INSTITUTE FOR MULTI-SENSORY EDUCATION, SENSATIONAL SAND, OG+, MORPHOLOGY PLUS including both word mark and design applications and other certain brands, trademarks and services marks owned and used by IMSE.

The Intellectual Property further includes all copyrights, both registered and unregistered, owned and used by IMSE, any non-registered copyrights in the Materials, any and all authorized or unauthorized video and audio recordings created by the School/School District discussing the Materials and any and all authorized or unauthorized modified Materials produced by the School/School District.

IMSE shall have and shall retain ownership of all right, title and interest in and to Materials and Intellectual Property enumerated herein.

Unless expressly indicated otherwise herein by IMSE, even if the School/School District has previously obtained IMSE's written permission to use any Materials, the School/School District agrees to obtain written consent each time before using the Materials enumerated above.

Except as expressly stated herein, the School/School District acknowledges that it has no right, title, or interest of any kind on any legal basis in or to the Materials or the Intellectual Property enumerated above.

Upon termination of this agreement, the School/School District agrees to immediately return to IMSE any printed and/or recorded Materials and/or Intellectual Property that the School/School District may have in its possession or control.

Indemnification of IMSE
To the extent allowed by law, the School/School District and its successors and assigns shall indemnify and hold harmless IMSE and its members, managers, managing directors, directors, officers, agents, representatives, employees, affiliates, subsidiaries, successors, heirs and assigns from and against any and all claims, liabilities, losses, costs or expenses, including but not limited to actual attorney fees and related costs and expenses, and damages, whether known or unknown, joint or several, incurred by such parties and related to or arising in any manner whatsoever from the performance of this engagement.

Limitation of Liability
IMSE and any of its members, managers, managing directors, directors, officers, agents, representatives, employees, affiliates, subsidiaries, successors, heirs and assigns shall not be liable for any loss or damage except as is a direct result of IMSE's intentional breach of any material provision of this engagement or willful misconduct. In no case shall IMSE be liable for special, incidental, consequential, punitive or exemplary damages, including lost profits or lost savings, whether or not such are foreseeable, or IMSE has been advised of the possibility of such damage. IMSE's liability, if any, under or in relation to this engagement and the services hereunder will be limited to the amount of payment actually received by IMSE in relation to this engagement.

It is understood and agreed that each of the parties hereto is an independent contractor and that neither party is, nor will be considered to be an agent, distributor, partner, fiduciary, or representative of the other. Except as authorized herein, neither party will act or represent itself, directly or by implication, in any such capacity in respect of the other or in any manner assume or create any obligation on behalf of, or in the name of, the other.

Confidentiality
The School/School District shall keep all Materials confidential and shall not sell, publicize, upload, video record, audio record, loan, rent, giveaway, describe, summarize, or otherwise reveal the Materials or their contents to any other person or entity. Any breach of these terms automatically terminates your authorized use of the Materials and may be subject to further action.

Severability
If any portion of this agreement is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the parties agree that the remainder of this agreement will be valid and enforceable.

Entire Agreement
This agreement represents the entire understanding of the parties relating to the engagement and may not be amended or modified in any respect except in writing, signed by the parties.

Governing Law
This agreement will be interpreted and construed under the laws of the State of Tennessee. The parties further agree that in the event of a dispute regarding this engagement or under this agreement, jurisdiction will be in the United States District Court for the Middle Tennessee.

Suspension and Debarment
By signing this agreement, IMSE certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction nor from federal financial or non-financial assistance, nor are any of the participants involved in the execution of this agreement suspended, debarred, or voluntarily excluded by any federal department or agency in accordance with Executive Order 12549 (Debarment and Suspension) and CFR 44 Part 17, or are on the disbarred vendors list at www.epls.gove. Further, IMSE agrees to notify Agency by certified mail should it or any of its agents become debarred, suspended or voluntarily excluded during the term of this agreement.

Attorney Fees
If any action or proceeding is instituted to enforce or interpret this agreement, the party prevailing in such proceeding will recover its actual attorneys' fees and related costs and expenses from the other party.

Notices
All notices required or permitted to be delivered under this agreement will be sent, if to IMSE or the School/School District, at the addresses set forth in this agreement or to such other name or address as may be given in writing to the other party. All notices under this agreement will be sufficient if delivered by electronic mail or overnight mail.

Dates of the In-Person Orton-Gillingham Plus Training are:
January 27-29 & February 25-26, 2026
8:00 AM - 3:30 PM to include lunch and breaks

Dates of the In-Person Morphology Plus Training are:
January 20-22 & February 18-19, 2026
8:00 AM - 3:30 PM to include lunch and breaks

in Murfreesboro, TN
30 contact hours per training

Please sign and return the contract and the school purchase order as soon as possible to:

Email: jessie@imse.com

Signatures below indicate acceptance of the terms outlined in this contract agreement.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Name: _____

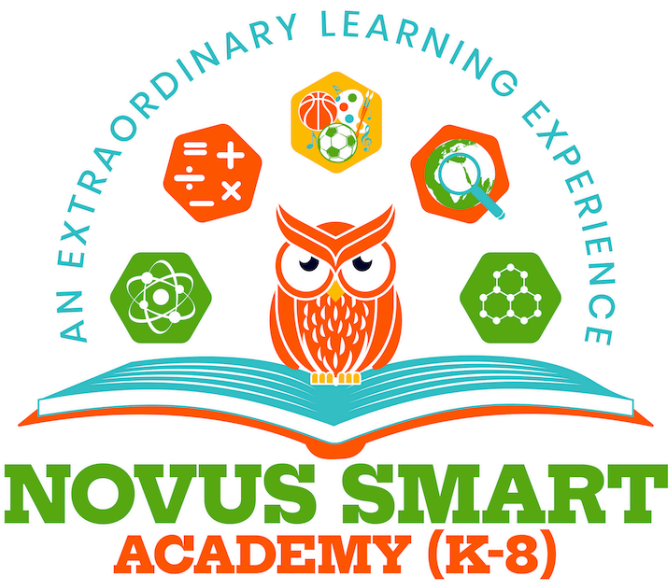
Date: _____ Signed: _____

Name: Jessica Irvin, IMSE Sales Coordinator

Tennessee Charter School Creation Application Template

For Sponsors Seeking to Open a Public Charter School in the 2026-27 School Year

Tennessee Department of Education | October 2024



Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Amended Application to Create a Public Charter School

To Open in the 2026-27 School Year

Date of Submission:

06/02/25

Submitted To:

Rutherford County Schools

Table of Contents

Insert the page numbers for each item listed in the table below. Enter "N/A" for items not required to complete.

COVER SHEET

Table of Contents	1
General Information	4
Application Completeness Checklist	10

ACADEMIC PLAN AND DESIGN

School Mission and Goals	10
Academic Focus and Performance Standards	34
Assessments	64
School Calendar and Schedule	79
Recruitment and Enrollment	83
Table 1: Enrollment Summary 1	96
Table 2: Anticipated Demographics	96
Table 3: Anticipated Demographics – At-Risk	N/A
Parent and Community Engagement and Support	97
School Culture and Discipline	112
Special Populations	133
Conversion Charter School Planning	N/A

OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

Governance	157
Table 4: Board Members	164
Facilities	166
Start-Up Plan	179
Personnel / Human Capital	205
Table 5: Staffing Chart	222
Professional Development	223
Transportation	231
Additional Operations	236
Charter Management Organizations	N/A
Network Vision, Growth Plan & Capacity	N/A
Network Governance	N/A
Network Management and Personnel	N/A

Table 6: Decision Making Responsibilities	N/A
Table 7: School Projections	N/A
Table 8: Network Staff Projections	N/A
Table 9: School Staff Projections	N/A
School Replication	N/A

.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

Operating Budget	247
Operating Budget Narrative	253
Network Financial Plan	N/A

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

School Portfolio Summary	N/A
Academic Performance Record	N/A
Fiscal and Operational Performance Record	N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Annual Academic Calendar	283
Attachment B: Daily Schedule	25
Attachment C: Enrollment Policy	295
Attachment D: Letters of Support	301
Attachment E: Student Handbook and Required Forms	390
Attachment F: Student Discipline Policy	413
Attachment G: Articles of Incorporation	436
Attachment H: Proof of Non-Profit and Tax-Exempt Status	440
Attachment I: By-laws	441
Attachment J: Board Member Code of Conduct	447
Attachment K: Conflict of Interest Policy	448
Attachment L: Board Member Resumes or Biographies	451
Attachment M: Board Policies	492
Attachment N: Organizational Chart: Year 1	498
Attachment O: Organizational Chart: Full Capacity	499
Attachment P: School Leader Resume *(if hired)*	500
Attachment Q: Insurance Coverage	503
Attachment R: CMO Agreement	N/A
Attachment S: Network Annual Progress Report	N/A

Attachment T: Organizational Chart: Year 1	N/A
Attachment U: Organizational Chart: Year 5	N/A
Attachment V: Previously Approved and Authorized Application for School Being Replicated	N/A
Attachment W: Operating Budget Template	510
Attachment X: Operating Budget Narrative	515
Attachment Y: Network Financial Plan	N/A
Attachment Z: Portfolio and Performance Template	N/A
Attachment AA: Performance and Evaluation Reports	N/A
Attachment BB: Renewal and Interim Reports	N/A
Attachment CC: Annual Reports	N/A
Attachment DD: Litigation Documents	N/A
Attachment EE: Audited Financial Statements	N/A

Cover Sheet

General Information

Name of Proposed Charter School	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)		
Sponsor / Sponsoring Entity	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)		
Proposed Authorizer	Rutherford County Schools		
Model or Focus of Proposed School ***(i.e., STEAM, Montessori, Opportunity Charter, etc.)***	SMART-integrated Curricula Framework with College and Career Exploration, Character Education, and Structured English Immersion for EL		
Grade Structure ***(i.e., K-5, 6-8, 9-12)***	**Year 1**	**Year 5**	**At Capacity**
	K-1	K-5	K-8
Projected Enrollment	**Year 1**	**Year 5**	**At Capacity**
	192	576	864
City, Neighborhood, and Community the School Intends to Serve	La Vergne (37086) and Smyrna (37167)		
Projected Opening School Year	2026		

Primary Point of Contact

Name	***Dr. Jeremy Sager***
Role	***Proposed Executive Director***
Mailing Address	***7257 Santeelah Way***
Mailing Address Line 2	
City, State, Zip Code	***Antioch, Tennessee 37013***
Primary Telephone	***901-210-4519***
Alternate Telephone	***615-663-9680***
Email Address	***jsager@novusSMARTacademy.org***

Application Category

Please select **ONE** box to indicate the category type for this application.

Category			Description
1	☐	**First-time Charter Sponsor**	This category applies to sponsors that meet **all** the following criteria: • Sponsor that seeks to open no more than one (1) public charter school or opportunity charter school during this application cycle. • Sponsor that has not previously operated, opened, or sponsored a charter school, charter network, or charter management organization in Tennessee or elsewhere in the United States.
2	☐	**Multi-School or Established Sponsor**	This category applies to all sponsors that do not meet the criteria for Category 1.

Sponsor & School Design Team

Provide information for the school's leader (if named) and all people who will serve on the school's design team; add lines as needed.

Full Name	Address	Current Job Title	Current Employer	Position with Proposed School
Charles Frazier	**5358 Murfreesboro Road, La Vergne, Tennessee 37086**	**Managing Attorney**	**Law Offices of Charles R. Frazier**	**Board Chair & Governance Committee Chair**
LaTarsha White	**1652 Carson Meadows Lane, Nolensville, Tennessee 37135**	**Assistant Principal**	**KIPP Nashville Public Schools**	**Board Vice Chair & Academics Committee Chair**
Daniel Kadeba	**5521 Dory Drive, Antioch, Tennessee 37013**	**Director of Finance and Strategy**	**Embla Medical**	**Board Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair**
Celest Davis	**431 Dellwood Drive, Smyrna, Tennessee 37167**	**Credentialing Specialist**	**DaVita Healthcare**	**Board Secretary**
Starson Audate	**1414 CC Road, Kingston, Tennessee 37082**	**Senior Associate of Corporate Strategic Analysis**	**Fortitude Re**	**Board Member**
Brian Bradshaw	**7594 Old Hickory Blvd, Whites Creek, Tennessee 37189**	**Executive Director of External Affairs & Ministerial Development**	**Mount Zion Baptist Church**	**Board Member**
Andrea Coleman	**146 Pepper Ridge Circle, Antioch, Tennessee 37013**	**Exceptional Education Teacher**	**Amergis Staffing with Metro Nashville Public Schools**	**Board Member**
Christian Hill	**402 Portsdale Drive, Brentwood, Tennessee 47027**	**Realtor & Experience Manager**	**Keller Williams Realty**	**Board Member**
Darius Moore	**149 Harvard Drive, Gallatin, Tennessee 37066**	**Director of Recruitment and Talent Selection**	**Pruitt Financial Group**	**Board Member**
Dexter Peterson	**341 Great Circle Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37228**	**Exceptional Education Contractor Consultant**	**Metro Nashville Public Schools**	**Board Member**
Tatyana Polite	**7000 Harris Hills Lane, Nashville, Tennessee 37211**	**Human Resources Business Partner**	**Ardent Health Services**	**Board Member**

Patricia Pryor	**810 General Cabot Court, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129**	**KIPP Antioch College Prep**	**Assistant Principal**	**Board Member**
Erica Roberts	**3508 Almar Knot Drive, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128**	**KIPP Antioch College Prep**	**Assistant Principal/Principal in Residence**	**Board Member**
Jeremy Sager	**7257 Santeelah Way, Antioch, Tennessee 37013**	**Proposed Executive Director & School Principal**	**Novus SMART Academy (K-8)**	**Ex Officio Board Member**
Loni Vazquez-Hall	**3421 Bluespruce Way, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128**	**Independent Financial Strategist**	**New Heights Leadership Development**	**Board Member**

Is the sponsor a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status?	☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ In Progress
If not already obtained, describe the steps that have been taken to obtain 501(c)(3) status:	

Sponsor History and Intent

Question 1	
Has the sponsor or proposed charter management organization[1] ever operated, opened, or managed a charter school?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Question 2					
Does this sponsor have any pending charter school applications currently under consideration by any authorizer in the United States?				☐ Yes ☒ No	
If yes, complete the table below; add lines as needed.					
State	Authorizer	Proposed School Name	Application Due Date	Decision Date	Proposed Opening Year

Question 3		
Does the sponsor or proposed charter management organization currently operate a charter school?		☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, complete the table below; add lines as needed.		
Name of Charter School	City and State	Authorizer

Question 4		
Will the sponsor replicate[2] a currently authorized charter school in Tennessee?		☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, complete the table below; add lines as needed.		
Name of Charter School that was Replicated	City and State	Authorizer

Question 5		
Is this sponsor submitting an application to more than one Tennessee authorizer or proposing to open more than one charter school during this application cycle?		☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, complete the table below; add lines as needed.		
Name of Proposed School	Submitted to Which Authorizer	

Question 6		
Will the sponsor contract or partner with a charter management organization (CMO) to manage or operate the proposed school?		☐ Yes ☒ No
I***f yes, complete the table below; add lines as needed.***		
Name of Charter Management Organization	City and State	

[1] "Charter management organization" or "CMO" means a nonprofit entity that manages or operates two (2) or more public charter schools as defined in T.C.A. § 49-13-104.

[2] "Replication" means the creation of one (1) or more subsequent charter schools that utilize the same academic focus of an existing charter school operated by a sponsor or governing board.

Question 7	
Is the sponsor proposing a new charter school with a change in academic focus[3] or grade structure from an existing Tennessee charter school they operate?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Question 8	
Is the sponsor proposing an Opportunity Public Charter School[4]?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Question 9	
If proposing an Opportunity Public Charter School, will the school provide a residential program for enrolled students pursuant to Chapter 1066 of the Public Acts of 2024?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Question 10	
Will the proposed school serve any combination of elementary grades of kindergarten through grade five (K-5)?	☒ Yes ☐ No

Question 11	
Will the proposed school serve any combination of high school grades nine through twelve (9-12)?	☐ Yes ☒ No

Question 12	
Will the sponsor convert[5] a non-charter public school to a charter school?	☐ Yes ☒ No

[3] "Academic focus" means a distinctive, thematic program such as math, science, arts, general academics, or an instructional program such as Montessori or Paideia pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-104 (1)

[4] "Opportunity public charter school" means a public charter school serving any of the grades six through twelve (6-12) for which at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the students enrolled in the public charter school, at the time of enrollment, are at-risk students and that provides Instruction to students in a traditional classroom setting; or a residential program for enrolled students and provides instruction to such students in a traditional classroom setting, as defined in Chapter 1066 of the Public Acts of 2024.

[5] "Conversion public charter school" means a charter school established by the conversion of an existing non-charter public school into a charter school as defined in T.C.A. § 49-13-104

Assurances

As the authorized representative of the sponsor applying to open a charter school in Tennessee, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award; and if awarded a charter, the school must comply with all assurances within this section, and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to public charter schools.

I affirm that the public charter school:

1. Will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the authorizer and in compliance with the charter agreement and the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act;
2. Will follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the operation of a public school, unless waived according to T.C.A. § 49-13-111(p);
3. Will provide special education services for students as provided in T.C.A. Title 49, Chapter 10, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
4. Will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it;
5. Will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
6. Will utilize this application as a contract with the authorizer, if no other agreement is signed, pursuant to Tennessee Attorney General Opinion No. 10-45;
7. Will comply with all provisions of the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act, including, but not limited to
    a. employing individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee;
    b. complying with Open Meetings and Open Records laws (T.C.A. §§ 8-44-101 *et seq.*; 10- 7-503, 504) (guidance is available from the Office of Open Records Counsel);
    c. not charging tuition, except for students transferring from another district to the school pursuant to the local board's out-of-district enrollment policy and T.C.A. § 49- 6-3003;
    d. notwithstanding subdivision 7c, not charging registration fees, enrollment fees, or tuition to the students enrolled in an Opportunity Public Charter School;
    e. following state financial (budgeting and audit) procedures and reporting requirements according to T.C.A. §§ 49-13-111, 120, and 127;
    f. requiring any member of the governing body, employee, officer, or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by T.C.A. § 8-19-101; and
8. Will, at all times, maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

Jeremy Sager
Signature of Authorized Representative

February 3, 2025
Date

Jeremy Sager
Printed Name of Authorized Representative

Proposed Executive Director
Title of Authorized Representative

Completeness Checklists

Items Required for All Sponsors

General Information	
Cover Sheet	☒
Sponsor History and Intent	☒
Assurances	☒

1.1 – Academic Plan and Design	
Narrative	☒

1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards	
Narrative	☒

1.3 - Assessments	
Narrative	☒

1.4 – School Calendar and Schedule	
Narrative	☒
Attachment A	☒
Attachment B	☒

1.5 – Recruitment and Enrollment	
Narrative	☒
Table 1	☒
Table 2	☒
Attachment C	☒

1.6 – Parent and Community Engagement and Support	
Narrative	☒
Attachment D	☒

1.7 – School Culture and Discipline	
Narrative	☒
Attachment E	☒
Attachment F	☒

1.8 – Special Populations	
Narrative	☒

2.1 – Governance	
Narrative	☒
Table 4	☒
Attachment G	☒
Attachment H	☒
Attachment I	☒
Attachment J	☒
Attachment K	☒
Attachment L	☒
Attachment M	☒

2.2 – Facilities	
Narrative	☒

2.3 – Start Up Plan	
Narrative	☒

2.4 – Personnel / Human Capital	
Narrative	☒
Attachment N	☒
Attachment O	☒
Attachment P	☒
Table 5	☒

2.5 – Professional Development	
Narrative	☒

2.6 – Transportation	
Narrative	☒

2.7 – Additional Operations	
Narrative	☒
Attachment Q	☒

3.1 – Operating Budget	
Attachment W	☒

3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative	
Narrative	☒
Attachment X	☒

Additional Requirements for Sponsors That Answered "Yes" to Specific Questions within the Sponsor History and Intent Section

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 1** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
2.9 – Network Vision, Growth Plan & Capacity	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment S	☐
4.1 – School Portfolio Summary	
Attachment Z	☐
4.2 – Academic Performance Record	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment Z	☐
4.3 – Fiscal and Operational Performance Record	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment AA	☐
Attachment BB	☐
Attachment CC	☐
Attachment DD	☐
Attachment EE	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 3** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.9 – Network Vision, Growth Plan & Capacity	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
2.10 - Network Governance	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
2.11 - Network Management and Personnel	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment T	☐
Attachment U	☐
Table 6	☐
Table 7	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 3** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.11 - Network Management and Personnel (cont.)	
Table 8	☐
Table 9	☐
3.3 – Network Financial Plan	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment Y	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 4** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.12 – School Replication	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment V	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 5** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.9 – Network Vision, Growth Plan & Capacity	
Supplementary Narrative	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 6** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.8 - Charter Management Organization	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Attachment R	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 7** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.2 - Academic Focus and Performance Standards	
Supplementary Narrative	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 8** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
Supplementary Table 3	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 9** of Sponsor History and Intent	
2.2 – Facilities	
Supplementary Narrative	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 10** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.2 - Academic Focus and Performance Standards	
Supplementary Narrative	☐
1.3 – Assessments	
Supplementary Narrative	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 11** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.2 - Academic Focus and Performance Standards	
Supplementary Narrative	☐

Required for Sponsors that answered "Yes" to: **Question 12** of Sponsor History and Intent	
1.9 – Conversion Charter School Planning	
Narrative	☐

Section 1 – Academic Plan and Design

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.1a: Provide a mission statement for the proposed charter school. At minimum, the mission statement should specify, in measurable terms, the school's objectives, the scholars it will serve, and the specific outcomes it aims to achieve. The school's mission statement will serve as the foundation for the entire application.

Mission Statement. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) provides scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career begin in Kindergarten. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will achieve this mission through the integration of four key design elements:

- **SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework.** Our curriculum framework includes Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology, designed in alignment with the Smart Schools principles for good education, developed by David Perkins and colleagues at Harvard Project Zero[1]. The Smart Schools principles are based on two guiding beliefs: 1) Learning is a consequence of thinking, and good thinking is learnable by all scholars; and 2) Learning should include deep understanding, which involves the flexible, active use of knowledge[2]. This innovative approach emphasizes deep learning, inquiry, and creativity across all disciplines to develop well-rounded, critical thinkers and problem-solvers through Inquiry-based Learning (IBL) and Project-based Learning (PBL).
    - IBL promotes critical thinking and curiosity in reading, writing, and social studies through dynamic exploration in Science and Research[3]. Science instruction will focus on hands-on experimentation and real-world problem-solving, equipping scholars with analytical and critical-thinking skills. For example, scholars in fourth grade may design and conduct experiments to understand renewable energy sources, applying mathematical calculations to measure their efficiency. Research in English/Language Arts and Social Studies will ignite intellectual curiosity and cultivate a lifelong love for learning. Scholars will learn how to ask meaningful questions, gather data, and present findings effectively. For instance, second graders might research ecosystems using digital tools, create artistic representations, and present their findings through multimedia presentations.
    - PBL develops scholars' practical problem-solving skills in Science, Math, and Technology through hands-on projects[4]. Math instruction will focus on hands-on experimentation and real-world problem-solving, equipping scholars with analytical and critical-thinking skills. For example, scholars in fourth grade may design and conduct experiments to understand renewable energy sources, applying mathematical calculations to measure their efficiency. Technology instruction will embed digital literacy and technological fluency to prepare scholars for innovation-driven futures. Scholars will use technology to access information, collaborate with peers, and develop solutions to complex problems. This integration ensures that technology is not just a tool but a fundamental part of the learning process.
- **College and Career Exploration.** Preparation for college and career pathways begins as early as Kindergarten. Through inquiry-based and project-based learning, scholars will gain exposure to the importance of education in shaping their futures. By utilizing IBL and PBL methods, scholars can actively explore and engage with concepts, leading them to discover the direct impact education has on their future career paths and life choices, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the value of learning beyond the classroom[5]. Grades K-2: Scholars explore foundational questions such as "What is a College?" by learning about local institutions and building a career vocabulary. Grades 3-5: Scholars delve into themes like "College and Career Pathways," engaging in hands-on projects that simulate real-world challenges in STEAM fields. For example, fifth-grade scholars might design a sustainable city prototype, integrating their knowledge of the SMART disciplines while practicing teamwork, research, and presentation skills. Grades 6-8: Scholars participate in advanced projects and career simulations, such as coding applications, engineering prototypes, and creating digital art portfolios, aligned with their interests and emerging career aspirations.
    - **Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Well-Being.** SEL is a cornerstone of scholar success at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). We will prioritize emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills through structured SEL activities supported by *CharacterStrong*, an evidence-based, multi-tiered solution designed to improve behavior, increase safety, and support mental health[6]. *CharacterStrong's* curricula and training will ensure our approach is intentional, research-based, and effective in addressing the holistic needs of our scholars.
    - **SEL Through Asset-Based Learning (ABL).** Scholars' unique strengths are leveraged to build confidence and a growth mindset. ABL focuses on the strengths that diverse scholars bring to the classroom, viewing scholar differences as assets and not deficits[7]. For example, during a "Kindness Challenge," scholars create appreciation cards for local healthcare workers, demonstrating emotional growth and community impact. With *CharacterStrong* integrated into these activities, we will amplify their impact, providing structured opportunities for scholars to practice compassion, gratitude, and connection.
    - **The Arts/Electives as a Pathway to SEL.** The Arts/Electives- including physical education, visual art, music, and technology- are integrated into our curriculum to inspire creativity and self-expression while deepening scholars' academic understanding. Through hands-on experiences, such as creating original artwork, performing in theatrical/musical productions, and exploring digital design projects, scholars will connect artistic expression with core academic concepts. With *CharacterStrong's* emphasis on whole-

child development, these experiences are intentionally linked to SEL outcomes, fostering a well-rounded and enriched learning experience.
    - **Daily Practices for Lasting Impact.** Morning meetings will focus on our Noble Core Values- Academic Excellence, Beacon of Joy, Character Development, Habits for Humanity, and Intellectual Curiosity- to model empathy, gratitude, and self-regulation, guided by *CharacterStrong* strategies to ensure consistency and effectiveness. Weekly character education lessons will emphasize the Novus Core Values and celebrate their connection to academic performance and personal SEL achievements. By embedding *CharacterStrong* into our routines, we create a positive school culture where every child feels known, loved, and respected in a safe school environment to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.
- **Structured English Immersion Program (SEI).** Our SEI program is designed to support English learners (EL) in achieving successful outcomes by fostering English language acquisition and academic success[8]. Our SEI program will focus on developmentally appropriate strategies that align with Tennessee Department of Education guidelines, ensuring English learners attain proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening to thrive academically.
    - **Grades K-2.** Scholars will build a strong foundation in English through targeted instruction in vocabulary, oral language development, phonemic awareness, and fluency. Strategies such as sentence frames, visual prompts, and interactive activities will be used to develop early literacy and communication skills. Successful outcomes include the ability to identify and use grade-level vocabulary, demonstrate phonemic awareness, and engage in basic oral language exchanges.
    - **Grades 3-5.** Instruction will emphasize academic vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension strategies to help scholars decode, analyze, and understand texts. Scaffolded support will enable scholars to develop higher-order thinking and critical analysis skills. Successful outcomes include the ability to comprehend grade-level texts, apply academic vocabulary across content areas, and construct coherent written and oral responses.
    - **Grades 6-8.** Advanced grammar structures, morphology, and syntax will be integrated into instruction to enhance academic discourse and comprehension of complex texts. Scholars will engage in activities that promote critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and academic collaboration. Successful outcomes include the ability to produce written and oral arguments, analyze complex texts, and participate in academic discussions with proficiency.

Our mission also aligns with T.C.A. § 49-13-104 by focusing on improving academic performance and will serve a diverse scholar population, including at least 70% of scholars identified as economically disadvantaged (ED), at least 25% of scholars with disabilities (SWD), and at least 35% of ELs, some of which will participate in our SEI program[9]. We aim to close the achievement gap across all demographics, ensuring that every scholar, regardless of background or ability, achieves academic growth and develops the character needed for long-term success.

Vision Statement. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) produces global achievers through high-quality academic instruction, character development, and relentless ambition for success in life. This vision aligns with Rutherford County Schools' 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, emphasizing early intervention to ensure every scholar thrives academically and personally[10]. Our approach also incorporates the OECD's principle that quality is essential for educational excellence[11].

Strategic Alignment and Impact. To clearly deliver on our mission and vision, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide high-quality learning experiences for scholars across all grade levels, ensuring access to resources and tailored interventions. We will also incorporate early college and career exploration into every grade level to prepare scholars for future success. We will monitor growth and achievement through intentional, data-driven practices to ensure that scholars continually make progress towards our school wide goals as well as their individual goals. We will uphold the priorities of Rutherford County Schools and the State of Tennessee, maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment while fostering academic excellence and whole-child development. Scholars and families at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will experience a transformative education that empowers them to achieve their goals and make meaningful contributions to the world.

Section 1.1b: Describe the goals for the proposed school for the first five (5) years of operation. Explain how these goals align with the purposes for charter schools found in T.C.A. § 49-13-102(a), the state's accountability systems, the authorizer's performance framework, and any priorities the authorizer sets.

Goals in Years 1-5. As evidenced by Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance levels of the Tennessee Academic Standards on TNReady state assessments, our scholars will demonstrate critical and creative thinking using our SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework and two-educator model. Our school design is based on the model of other high-performing charter schools across the nation that serve similar scholar populations, such as Zeta Public Schools and Achievement First Public Charter Schools in New York City, New York; Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee; Purpose Preparatory Academy and Valor Collegiate Academies in Nashville, Tennessee; and Yes Prep Public Schools in Houston, Texas, which all focus on high-quality academic instruction for scholars.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals
(Required for All Sponsors)

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will celebrate several milestones on our journey to being fully enrolled by August 2033, confirming that all our scholars can and will achieve excellence at high levels when adults believe and provide access to high-quality academic instruction with the appropriate support systems in place to meet their needs. The following timeline summarizes our goals:

- After one year of enrollment, in the spring of 2028, at least 85% of our scholars will demonstrate at least two years of growth on the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) assessment in reading, language, math, and science.
- In the spring of 2029, at least 50% of our returning scholars in Grades 1-3 will be on or above grade level in reading and math.
- In the spring of 2029, at least 50% of our returning scholars in Grade 3 will score in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady state assessments in English and math.
- In the spring of 2031, at least 60% of our returning scholars in Grade 5 will be on or above grade level in reading and math with scholars scoring in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on their TNReady states assessments in English and math.
- In August 2034, at least 75% of our returning scholars in Grade 8 will transition to our soon-to-be proposed early college and career high school (Novus SMART Collegiate), on or above grade level in reading and math with scholars scoring in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on their TNReady states assessments in English/language arts and math.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide this unique, high-quality educational option to families in Rutherford County, Tennessee, strategically targeting underserved communities where families of color may experience low to moderate socioeconomic challenges, and who also may be zoned to other schools in Rutherford County Schools throughout the district due to the overcrowding of schools. Rutherford County Schools shared its county-wide rezoning plan to transition scholars and families to schools in the district with available seats. Rutherford County Schools spent more than a year studying all attendance zones and school capacities using assistance from a third-party consultant[12]. Rutherford County Schools gathered input from parents and guardians before making final decisions during meetings that took place the week of September 18-22, 2023, at three school campuses: La Vergne High School on Monday, Stewarts Creek High School on Tuesday, and Siegel High School on Wednesday.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes ambitious annual and long-term academic achievement goals that are absolute, comparative, and longitudinal measures of success. These goals align to Rutherford County Schools' strategic plans[13], Tennessee Academic Standards[14], and tenets of Every Scholar Succeeds Act (ESSA)[15]. With the implementation of our slow-growth model, all our scholars will enroll with us beginning in Kindergarten or First Grade; over time, some scholars and families will join in later Grades. Therefore, our measures of success will stand as evidence of our commitment to all scholars outperforming the local schools in our community, making measurable academic progress from year to year, and demonstrating Met Expectations (Level 3) and/or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) in English/Language Arts and math after at least two years of enrollment. Regardless of the specific grade-entry point of any individual scholar, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to every scholar's success as such goals and measures on state, national, and literacy inventories indicate.

Similar to the goals established by educator experts at Believe Academy in Memphis, Tennessee, our academic achievement goals support the mission and vision of our school by implementing an academic focus and academic plan that will improve learning through our four key design elements- SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework, college and career exploration, character education through social-emotional learning, and Structured English Immersion- to close the achievement gap between high-achieving and low-achieving scholars. We also set goals to ensure our scholars achieve at levels that meet or exceed the district, state, and federal accountability guidelines and expectations.

Goal 1: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) and/or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance in English/Language Arts.

- Absolute Measure 1.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will read on or above grade level after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
- Comparative Measure 1.3: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.

- Growth Measure 1.4: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the Reading Comprehension section of the NWEA MAP assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 2: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) and/or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance in math.

- Absolute Measure 2.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. The proficiency rate of scholars in Grade 8 taking the Grade 8 TNReady math assessment or eligible scholars taking the Integrated math I EOC assessment will meet or exceed the proficiency rate of the highest-performing district in Tennessee up to 85%.
- Comparative Measure 2.2: All scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 2.3: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the mathematics section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 3: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) and/or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance in Science.

- Absolute Measure 3.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science with the reporting category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. Our scholars in Grade 8 who have attended for at least for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain a score on the science section of the ACT Aspire in the 70th percentile or greater.
- Comparative Measure 3.2: In each testing year, scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee. Scholars who have attended for 7 or more consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that equals or exceeds the top 10% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 3.3: In each testing year, overall performance in science, as measured by the TNReady, will, on average, demonstrate growth in proficiency in each tested year equal to or greater than that of similar schools. In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the science section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 4: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) and/or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance in Social Studies.

- Absolute Measure 4.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4)on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
- Comparative Measure 4.2: Scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds

the state average. Scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.

- Growth Measure 4.3: Overall performance in social studies, as measured by the TNReady, will, on average, demonstrate growth in proficiency equal to or greater than that of similar schools.

Goal 5: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Art.

- Absolute Measure 5.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will demonstrate proficiency in artistic skills and concepts, as measured by a portfolio assessment scoring in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) using the rubric. At least 60% will achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on the rubric.
- Comparative Measure 5.2: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) ratings on portfolio assessments at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve at a rate that Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) above the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will achieve portfolio assessment scores in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 5.3: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the portfolio-based art assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 6: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Technology.

- Absolute Measure 6.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will demonstrate proficiency in digital literacy and coding fundamentals in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4), as measured by their performance on a technology rubric. At least 60% will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on the rubric.
- Comparative Measure 6.2: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) ratings on a technology rubric at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve at a rate that Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) above the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will achieve technology rubric scores in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 6.3: Technology In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the technology assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 7: The school will maintain good standing under the Tennessee ESSA accountability guidelines and system.

- Measure 7.1: Under the Tennessee ESSA accountability system, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain consistent good standing. The state will never identify the school as a Priority School or determine that it has met the criteria to be identified as a school at risk for closure based on inadequate academic progress or achievement. We will be in good standing with performance for all scholars, regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

The following organizational goals will also contribute to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s long-term success.

Goal 8: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will demonstrate fiduciary and fiscal responsibility.

- Measure 8.1: As evidenced by external annual audit reports, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will demonstrate that it meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.
- Measure 8.2: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will present and follow a balanced budget, demonstrating the effective allocation of financial resources towards the fulfillment of our mission.

Goal 9: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be fully enrolled with high levels of attendance and reenrollment.

- Measure 9.1: The school will meet projected enrollment targets and will maintain enrollment throughout the year.
- Measure 9.2: Of the scholars who successfully complete the year, at least 90% will reenroll for the following school year, with exceptions for scholars and families who move out of the district or who lose access to transportation.
- Measure 9.3: The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of at least 95% (i.e., 183 scholars in Year 1; 274 scholars in Year 2; 365 scholars in Year 3; 456 scholars in Year 4; 548 scholars in Year 5; and 821 scholars at full capacity).

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals
(Required for All Sponsors)

Goal 10: Parents/guardians will demonstrate satisfaction with our academic program and school-to-home communication.

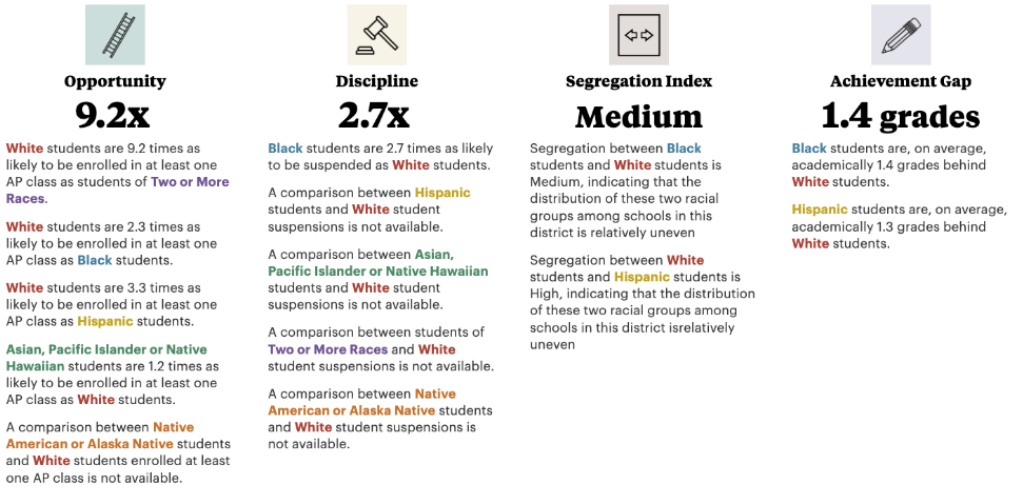
- Measure 10.1: Parent satisfaction surveys will indicate 80% or more of families are satisfied with the school's academic program with at least 80-85% of families responding.
- Measure 10.2: Parent satisfaction surveys will indicate 80% or more of families are satisfied with the school's communication with at least 80-85% of families responding.

Goal 11: The Board of Directors will provide effective and sound oversight of the school.

- Measure 11.1: The Board will conduct a formal annual review of the school leader.
- Measure 11.2: The Board will conduct an annual self-evaluation to assess the Board's strengths and weaknesses.
- Measure 11.3: The Board will conduct a formal annual review of bylaws and policies.
- Measure 11.4: The Board will conduct an annual review of organizational strengths and weaknesses.

Prescribed Purposes for Charter Schools: Purpose 1 and 2. Our mission and vision will meet the prescribed purposes for charter schools found in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-102(a)[16]. To determine how to meet Purpose 1 (to improve learning for all scholars and close the achievement gap between high and low achieving scholars) and Purpose 2 (to provide options for parents/guardians to meet the educational needs of scholars) of T.C.A. § 49-13-102(a), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) analyzed the current Rutherford County Schools located in La Vergne and Smyrna. The Tennessee Department of Education Report Card data show that Rutherford County Schools outperformed the State of Tennessee in math proficiency (50.5% versus 36.4% statewide), in English/Language Arts proficiency (48.1% versus 38.8% statewide), in Science proficiency (50.4% versus 44.3% statewide), and in Social Studies proficiency (57% versus 44.7% statewide); and Rutherford County Schools' graduation rate is 96.2% as compared to the 90.6% statewide rate[17]. Rutherford County Schools specifically located in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities where Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes to open and operate are as follows: math proficiency (39% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 50.5% across the entire district as compared to 36.4% statewide), English/Language Arts proficiency (39.4% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 48.1% across the entire district as compared to 38.8% statewide), Science proficiency (43.7% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 50.4% across the entire district as compared to 44.3% statewide), and Social Studies proficiency (46.4% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 57% across the entire district as compared to 44.7% statewide); and 95.7% graduation rate in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 96.2 across the entire district as compared to the 90.6% statewide rate.
Focusing on the communities of La Vergne and Smyrna, data revealed that 61% of scholars perform below the statewide average in math (including two high schools), 60.6% of scholars perform below the statewide average in English/Language Arts, 56.3% of scholars perform below the statewide average in Science (including one high school), and 53.6% of scholars perform below the statewide average in Social Studies (including two high schools). Data implied this deficit derives from the disproportionality of scholar access and experience for scholars of color, as illustrated in Figure 1[18]. Generally, scholars of color in these communities have less opportunity to enroll in advanced placement classes, Black scholars face suspension more than twice as often as White scholars, the levels of segregation between White scholars and scholars of color are significant, and both Black and Hispanic scholars face achievement gaps when compared to White scholars. These conditions, along with school overcrowding resulting from a rapidly growing population, made this community a prime location for our charter school.

Figure 1 - Disproportionality of Scholar Experience in Rutherford County Schools



Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)

To begin to address the achievement gap from the beginning of a scholar's career, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will improve Tier I English/Language Arts instruction with an ILB approach and Tier I math instruction with a PBL approach to whole-class learning, small group learning, and independent learning with a strategic two-educator model. These instructional methods are flexible and adaptable to individual scholars, and we will also incorporate opportunities for scholars to productively struggle through collaborative and independent performance tasks that exercise their individual critical and creative thinking skills and increase their capacity to work effectively with their peers. Teachers will internalize curricula resources and materials to anticipate misconceptions and plan responses for them with grade-level scaffolds that maintain the integrity of and access to grade-level content for all scholars.

Scholars will also receive instruction and support in academics (MTSS-Academics) that will provide them access to prescribed learning paths in intervention and/or enrichment using a blended-learning model of whole-class learning, small group learning, and independent learning for high-performing, mid-performing, and low-performing scholars. MTSS-Academics will solely focus on responding to scholars' needs in English/Language Arts and math with skills-based tasks that help to make progress towards closing the achievement gap.

Purpose 3. The use of ABL, IBL, and PBL will also help Novus SMART Academy (K-8) meet Purpose 3, which is to use different and innovative teaching methods and provide greater decision-making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for scholar performance[19]. These learning approaches are research-based strategies, scientifically proven to create high-performing schools with innovative practices. Their innovative nature derives from their flexibility and adaptability. Because each scholar's strengths, curiosity, and interests shape their learning, each scholar's educational experience can be tailored individually.

Asset-based Learning. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) understands that teachers may face many challenges in the classroom, especially related to supporting scholars at risk and scholars who receive special education services. Our instructional approach incorporates ABL to support all learners regardless of their present academic performance, behavior, mindset, socioeconomic status, cultural backgrounds, and differences to ensure all learners thrive in a rigorous classroom setting with high-quality academic instruction. What makes ABL effective in the classroom is that teachers can identify scholars' strengths, build their capacity to advocate for themselves, and to contribute to learning experiences in a positive and rewarding way. Barbara Pape, Senior Director of the Learner Variability Project at Digital Promise, believes that scholars who receive special education services benefit the most from ABL because it makes learning more comfortable and gives them the opportunity to take academic risks[20]. To promote ABL approaches for all learners, teachers must see the value in scholars' differences and use them to identify their assets.

Integrating ABL in the classroom is an effective approach to provide all scholars with high-quality learning experiences[22]. While access exposes marginalized practices in underserved communities, ABL establishes that all school communities are valued, have strength, and potential. This means that both teachers and scholars are equally valued for the assets they bring to the classroom rather than being characterized by achievement gaps and deficiencies. ABL effectively unlocks scholars' potential by focusing on their talents. Aligned to our SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework, we will cultivate scholars' talents in the Arts/Electives and through Character Education, which has proven to reduce the focus on academic deficiencies and social-emotional inadequacies[23]. Our two-educator model in the classroom will give our educators the opportunity to activate ABL through their instructional planning and delivery to maximize instructional time in the classroom. Our Teachers-in-Residence will receive support alongside our Licensed Teachers to produce results, which includes instructional coaching that is centered on their strengths to build a foundation for gaining new skills, and that reduces the damaging burdens put on new teachers to meet unrealistic growth expectations using antiquated strategies and punitive structures.

Why does an asset-based approach in education matter? With at least 25% of our scholars being identified as scholars with disabilities, at least 70% of our scholars being identified as economically disadvantaged, and at least 35% of scholars being identified as EL- to include a recent 11% increase of Middle Eastern families in our proposed school communities- Novus SMART Academy (K-8) anticipates being increasingly diverse as we grow and develop over time. With our growth and development over time, we understand the importance of representation and being responsive to the academic and behavioral needs of the scholars and families we will serve. Like New York University's Steinhardt Teacher Residency Program[24], ABL will help us to cultivate and implement an effective and high-quality academic institutional plan that will eliminate deficit thinking and harmful biases that hold scholars back, especially scholars at risk, scholars with disabilities, and ELs; often majority scholars of color.

An effective approach to facilitating ABL in the classroom that educators in the New York University's Steinhardt Teacher Residency Program implement in their instructional practices is learning what scholars know first before trying to teach new content they do not know. Scholars who feel known, loved, and respected for who they are and what they know often have the motivation and confidence to see themselves as capable learners who can increase their competence through learning and rigorous tasks.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals
(Required for All Sponsors)

As it relates to Character Education, ABL also reinforces scholars' emotional constancy before addressing their challenging behaviors and deficits[25]. As evidenced by Valor Collegiate Academies' Compass Circles, ABL through Character Education is proven to be most effective when scholars and educators focus on building trusting and lasting relationships and take time to support their social-emotional wellness with research-based strategies[26]. Data show the results of scholars and staff who participate in the Compass Circles:

- 84% of scholars report that Circle helps them learn new ways they can help their friends.
- 80% of scholars report that Circle helps them feel less alone.
- 83% of scholars report that Circle helps them become better persons.
- 82% of faculty report that Circle has changed the way that they think about emotions.
- 80% of faculty report that Circle helps them become friends with people who they may not have gotten to know outside of Circle.
- 80% of faculty report that Circle helps them learn new ways they can help their colleagues.

When we consider the impact that implicit bias has on our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, it becomes even more apparent that to create rigorous learning opportunities we must develop an ABL mindset[27]. Otherwise, we risk stifling scholars' potential through perceived negative biases that may have no bearing. Shifting from a deficit mindset to an ABL mindset requires reflection, avoiding assumptions, and asking questions. We will avoid assumptions by discovering the assets that scholars bring to our classroom with curiosity as follows:

- What do my scholars know?
- What are they bringing into the classroom?
- Ask the following questions:
    - What do you think is your greatest talent?
    - Do you play any sports?
    - What is your favorite thing to do?
    - Do you sing or play any instruments?
    - What are the three favorite cities or countries that you have visited?
    - What are your three favorite dishes to cook, bake, grill, or eat?
    - What else should I know about you, your skills, and your interests?

Including Scholar Assets. After we have collected background information on our scholars, we will use this information to enrich the learning experience for every scholar in the classroom. Effective research-based strategies to use based on the background information collected includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Create group projects or assignments based on similar interests. For instance, group scholars with developed musical ability together to research the power of performance and assign scholars who identify as avid readers to collaborate on the power of the written word.
- Create group projects or assignments based on diverse skill sets. For instance, assign groups to debate a topic while bringing together scholars with different professional and leadership levels, or assign surveys or paragraph submissions at the end of the group assignment to ensure everyone participates.
- Without stereotyping scholar strengths and interests, encourage them to make use of their unique insights by asking them to share their thoughts and opinions.

Inquiry-based Learning. IBL is a scholar-centered approach to learning that begins each lesson with an essential question[28]. To answer the essential question, scholars investigate the topic and develop foundational language and knowledge skills throughout the lesson. Scholars play an active part in both their learning and the decision-making process using IBL, activating their curiosity and desire to discover deeply. There are several approaches to IBL in literacy development, however, research-based curricula that are aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards will give our scholars access to high-quality academic instructional materials that tap into their interests and skills. For example, in Grades K-5, we will use Amplify CKLA, the leading early literacy curriculum grounded in the Science of Reading. By combining knowledge-building and research-based foundational skills in literacy, the CKLA curriculum guides teachers in developing strong readers, writers, and thinkers[29].

Statistics show that one or more scholars in the classroom are neurodivergent[30]. Some scholars have specific learning disabilities that cause certain types of academic tasks to be challenging, such as but not limited to limited attention spans, lack of organization, reduced working memory, time management challenges, sensory perception challenges, and speed of processing delays. All these learning disabilities affect how the learning process happens, which means that something adults might consider as a simple task, like copying a sentence from the board or reading a short text, can be challenging for some neurodivergent learners. Amplify CKLA effectively builds knowledge and explicit skills through high-quality academic instruction with an IBL approach. To support diverse learning styles, our scholars in Grades K-2 will complete one full lesson that builds foundational reading skills in the Skills Strand, as well as one full lesson that builds background knowledge in the Knowledge Strand. Through learning in each of these strands, scholars will develop the early literacy skills necessary to help them become confident readers and build the context to understand what they're reading. Our scholars in

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)

Grades 3–5, scholars will complete Knowledge and Skills lessons that are integrated in one set of instructional materials. These lessons begin to combine skills and knowledge with increasingly complex texts, close reading, and a greater writing emphasis, and our scholars will use their skills to go on their own independent reading adventures[31].

Effective IBL is an active learning approach in which scholars have voice and choice. Our scholars will be motivated to learn, involved in the decision-making process, and encouraging them to take responsibility for their learning. Scholars learn key life skills through IBL that effectively promote the following:

- Social Interaction: Helps scholars with their attention span and to develop reasoning skills. Social interaction also encourages scholars to generate their own ideas and critique in group discussions. It also develops agency, ownership and engagement with learning.
- Exploration: Allows scholars to investigate, design, imagine and explore, therefore developing curiosity, resilience and optimism.
- Argumentation and Reasoning: Creates a safe and supportive environment for scholars to engage in discussion and debate. Promotes engagement in scientific discussion and improves learning of scientific concepts. It also encourages scholars to generate questions, formulate positions and make decisions.
- Positive Attitudes to Failure: The iterative and evaluative nature of many STEM problems means failure is an important part of the problem-solving process and helps to develop a healthy attitude to failure that encourages reflection, resilience and continuous improvement[32].

The goal of IBL is to create learning opportunities that are rich, purposeful, and dynamic, while challenging scholars to think critically and creatively about their learning[33]. We will use IBL in an effective way to differentiate instruction using our two-educator Model, meet the needs of all scholars- especially for scholars receiving special education services, and teach them how to persist, manage, listen, and think flexibly. Scholars will learn to gather and analyze data during the inquiry process, ask new questions, and communicate their learning; a skill set meant to develop lifelong learning habits. Through IBL, instruction and delivery of content will be modified to meet the needs of all learners, which leads to higher scholar engagement with access to high-quality academic instruction.

A common feeling among scholars is fear of failure, which is why strong classroom routines are established so that they feel confident asking questions, seek other perspectives and help, and develop independence giving teachers more time to provide targeted support to all scholars. Developing successful problem solving and inquiry gives scholars choice in content and how they share their information, which creates authentic learning experiences that scholars feel confident participating in.

DeMink-Carthew and Netchoh (2019) wanted to know if scholars really enjoy making choices in their learning and a personalized learning experience[34]. Seventy-two scholars in Grades seven and eight participated in the study. In a social studies class, scholars engaged in inquiry learning about ancient civilizations. The inquiry unit was split into two phases. In phase one, scholars co-developed inquiry questions about ancient civilizations with the teacher. In phase two, scholars participated in co-planning, inquiry, presentation preparation, and sharing. In both phases, scholars were participating in guided inquiry, but were given the freedom to choose how they learned including visual journaling or typed notes, frequency of check-ins with the teacher, working at a desk, table, or floor, and the type of media to explore including videos, websites, or books. After the two phases, scholars were asked the following: if they liked choice and experienced low stress, liked choice and experienced high stress, neither liked or disliked choice, disliked choice and experienced high stress, and disliked choice and experienced low stress. Of the 72 participants, 53 scholars reported liking choice and experiencing low stress, seven liked choice and experienced high stress, 10 were indifferent, two scholars disliked choice, and one experienced low stress while the other scholar experienced high stress. Overall, 74% of scholars enjoyed a more IBL experience.

The integration of IBL in the science classroom provides an alternative approach for scholars who receive special education services to learn scientific knowledge and skills[35]. For example, in Grades K-8, we will use the STEMscopes science curriculum, which integrates grade-level Tennessee Academic Standards within the 5E + IA framework: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate, Intervention, and Acceleration. These curricula resources support research results that indicate the integration of IBL in the classroom benefits all scholars with strong academic outcomes.

Project-based Learning. PBL is a learning approach that encourages scholars to learn by actively investigating and responding to complex questions, problems, or challenges[36]. PBL is not just about understanding content, but also about developing critical skills, such as problem-solving skills, collaboration skills, and communication skills. PBL is grounded in several key principles:

- Real-world Connection: Projects are designed around real-world problems or challenges, making learning authentic and relevant.
- Sustained Inquiry: Scholars explore questions that interest them, fostering a desire to learn and investigate.
- Constructive Investigation: Scholars explore multiple resources and viewpoints, helping them construct their own understandings and meaning.

- Collaboration: Scholars engage in small-group work, promoting collaboration and teamwork.
- Reflection: Scholars reflect on their learning process and outcomes.

Using PBL will allow us to provide access to high-quality academic instruction for scholars, regardless of their present level of academic performance. For example, in Grades K-8, we will use enVision mathematics curriculum to teach Fluency and Procedural, Conceptual, and Application math Skills that are aligned to the Tennessee Academic Standards for math. This curriculum resource supports research results that indicate the integration of PBL in the classroom benefits all scholars with strong academic outcomes.

The interactive and personal nature of PBL naturally boosts scholar engagement. When scholars find purpose in their work- whether it's designing a community garden, creating a multimedia presentation, or coding a mobile app- their motivation soars. This intrinsic motivation is particularly powerful with scholars who receive special education services, where they may have varied interests and learning needs or styles[37]. By engaging in projects requiring sustained investigation, scholars consistently hone crucial life skills, such as time management, organization, and self-direction. For scholars who receive special education services, who often face challenges in these areas, PBL can be transformative. Group projects in PBL will provide ample opportunities for all scholars, and specifically those who receive special education services, to collaborate with their peers and teachers. They also learn to articulate their ideas, listen to others, and work as part of a team, which are skills that are essential in both academic and professional settings. Effective strategies that we will use to support the successful integration of PBL in the classroom are as follows:

- Choosing the Right Project: Pick an appropriate grade-level task that will also spark scholars' interests, master curriculum goals, and respond to a real-world challenge.
- Planning for Differentiation: Making sure that every scholar has access to the project is super important. Provide different levels of support and give every scholar a chance to shine, using universal design principles to make sure the project works for everyone in the classroom.
- Setting Up a Supportive Environment: Creating a classroom vibe that encourages scholars to take risks and ask questions. We understand that it is not just about the result, but an opportunity to celebrate the whole learning process.
- Embedding Skill Instruction: Teaching important academic and life skills, linking them directly to the project, making them even more meaningful for scholars.
- Balancing Rigor and Support: Finding the balance between rigor and support is crucial in PBL implementation. Challenge scholars but provide opportunities along the way for them to succeed.

While traditional learning works for some scholars, PBL is especially beneficial for underperforming scholars, disengaged scholars, and scholars who receive special education services[38]. By connecting scholars to their learning with hands-on activities and encouraging them to work on topics they choose for themselves, PBL engages scholars with different needs and helps them relate to the content[39]. The incorporation of teamwork and collaboration also facilitates the development of social skills and contributes to scholars' emotional development. PBL takes the whole scholar's well-being into account with a holistic approach to high-quality academic instruction to reduce disparities in the skills and abilities of scholars from diverse backgrounds.

The OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills aimed to identify the policies and practices that best encourage skill development in diverse scholar populations. OECD Research has shown that PBL has a positive impact on diverse learners and underperforming scholars[40]. According to one study, ELs did better on a language proficiency test if they were taught in a PBL classroom setting. Researchers from the University of Southern California demonstrated an improved performance for scholars from both low and high socio-economic families in urban school districts with higher proportions of scholars from low-income households[41].

At JSTEM Academy, a middle school in Converse, Texas, the Principal made it a primary goal to implement PBL throughout the curriculum. The school has a scholar body composed of nearly 80% Hispanic and African American scholars with 18% identified as English learners and over 70% economically disadvantaged. To address the needs of these scholars, the approach taken focused on pedagogy allowing scholars to express themselves through their projects. By incorporating service-learning and civic engagement, allowing scholars to choose media to match their strengths, and teaching empathy, this program helped diverse scholars thrive and achieve academic outcomes[42]. We understand that diversity is a fact of life in every classroom. In a typical class, we will have scholars who are high achievers and scholars who struggle. Some will receive special education services and others will have suffered from trauma. The PBL approach will improve learning for all our scholars, regardless of their present levels of academic performance.

To support literacy development, scholars will read, annotate, and discuss grade-level texts in context across all subjects. These activities reinforce the foundational skills of literacy while strengthening the love of reading. To support numeracy development, scholars will complete grade-level math exercises and engage in science and technology challenges to provide the foundational skills they need in conceptual thinking and strengthen their love for numbers and expressions.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals
(Required for All Sponsors)

Purpose 4. To meet Purpose 4 (measure performance of pupils and faculty and ensure that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement fully aligned rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction. We will also administer formative and summative assessments that provide projects towards Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards across all grade levels and subjects.

Purpose 5. To create ongoing professional learning and development opportunities for teachers, we will offer professional learning and development for teachers, school leaders, and staff members for 17 days before the first day of school on August 3, 2026 (see Section 2.5a for more details). Teachers, school leaders, and staff members will also receive ongoing professional learning and development and coaching support throughout the school year; these offerings will be driven by schoolwide data and prescribed learning needs (see Section 2.5c for more details). Teachers will also have opportunities to step into leadership roles, such as grade-level chairs or content specialists, where they may provide an additional layer of support to their colleagues. We will learn and grow together as a school community to ensure our scholars and families receive the most extraordinary learning experience in Rutherford County, Tennessee.

Purpose 6. To address Purpose 6, to afford parents/guardians substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children in T.C.A. § 49-13-102(a), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is dedicated to empowering our scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members to break free from limiting beliefs by unlocking scholars' true potential. We will foster a school community where all scholars thrive as changemakers, modeling transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of achievement, and making a positive impact in our community and beyond. Our families will have multiple opportunities to engage with our teachers, school leaders, and staff members throughout the school year at various school events, such as, but not limited to, College & Career Nights, learning expeditions (i.e., field trips), and schoolwide events and celebrations (i.e., National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations, Black History Month Celebrations, Noble Fest on Fridays, awards ceremonies, report card pick-ups, etc.). All families will attend summer orientation meetings prior to the start of the school year and will attend scholar-led conferences to learn more about their scholars' present level of performance.

Performance Framework. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s annual and long-term academic goals align with the model performance framework of the Tennessee Department of Education and Rutherford County Schools, as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Academic Performance Framework Alignment

Academic Performance Framework	
Rutherford County Schools Key Areas	**Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Alignment**
Scholar Outcomes (25% to 35%)	
Achievement: Percent of scholars performing at "met or exceeded expectations" on state assessments through two pathways: • Absolute achievement relative to other schools. • Performance on Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) targets (growth in achievement).	**English/Language Arts Absolute Measure 1.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will read on or above grade level after four consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. **Math Absolute Measure 2.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. The proficiency rate of scholars in Grade 8 taking the Grade

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	
	8 TNReady math assessment or eligible scholars taking the Integrated math I EOC assessment will meet or exceed the proficiency rate of the highest-performing district in Tennessee up to 85%. **Science Absolute Measure 3.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science after four consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science with the reporting category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. Our scholars in grade 8 who have attended for at least for five consecutive years will, on average, attain a score on the science section of the ACT Aspire in the 70th percentile or greater. **Social Studies Absolute Measure 4.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies after four consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
Growth: TVAAS growth for all scholars and progress on all achievement levels for subgroups.	At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years- including scholars identified as scholars with disabilities, scholars identified as ELs, scholars with a 504 Plan, and at-risk scholars- will demonstrate growth as evidenced by TVAAS expected growth effectiveness levels in English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies as follows: • **Level 5:** Significant evidence that the scholars made more growth than expected. • **Level 4:** Moderate evidence that the scholars made more growth than expected. • **Level 3:** Evidence that the scholars made growth as expected.
Ready Graduate (High School Only): Percent of high school graduates who demonstrate the necessary skills for postsecondary, military, and workforce readiness by meeting either ACT, Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSO), or military criteria through two pathways: • Absolute achievement relative to other schools. • Performance on AMO targets (growth in Ready Graduate indicator).	Not Applicable

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	
Chronically Out of School: Percent of scholars who are chronically out of school, defined as missing 10 percent or more of a school year due to absences or out of school suspensions, through two pathways: • Absolute achievement (relative to other schools) • Performance on AMO targets (reduction in percent of scholars chronically out of school).	**Measure 7.3:** The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of at least 95% (i.e., 183 scholars in Year 1; 274 scholars in Year 2; 365 scholars in Year 3; 456 scholars in Year 4; 548 scholars in Year 5; and 821 scholars at full capacity).
English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA): Progress toward English language proficiency through two pathways: • Percent of scholars exiting ESL services, weighted by initial ELP. • Percent of scholars meeting or exceeding the growth standard based on prior English proficiency.	At least 50% of all scholars identified as ELs who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years will exit ESL services, weighted by initial ELP; at least 50% will demonstrate growth and/or will meet or exceed grade-level performance in English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
Mission-Specific Goal (10%)	
Each school authorized by Rutherford County Schools will define a mission-specific goal within their charter agreement to be evaluated within the School Performance Framework. Each mission-specific goal is unique and pre-determined in collaboration with LEA staff. The inclusion of this goal offers an opportunity: 1. For schools to showcase what makes them unique based on the model described within their charter application. 2. For elementary schools who may be missing state scholar outcomes data due to many of their scholars being in non-tested grade levels, this goal can support the tracking of growth and achievement for scholars who do not take state testing through nationally normed assessments. 3. To include supplemental data for schools who are staggering their opening by grade level. 4. To capture additional important data aligned with their mission that schools believe are beneficial and are outside the scope of what is measured within the academic portion of the framework. This can include items such as ACT scores, nationally normed internal assessment data, and curriculum rubrics. The school must adhere to the guidelines established by the LEA to develop the proposed mission-specific goal. Rutherford County Schools staff will either approve the goal as is and incorporate it within the school's accountability and reporting, or it will engage in further negotiations regarding the goal. If the school chooses to make changes to its mission-specific goal at any point in time during the tenure of the charter agreement, the school must amend the charter agreement to do so. The following are guidelines for schools in the development of the mission-specific goal: The proposed goal must be scholar-centered, and outcome driven. • The goal must describe scholar outcomes and not action steps, curriculum, or adult actions.	**Proposed Unique Model** • SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework • College and Career Exploration • Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Well-Being • Structured English Immersion Program **English/Language Arts Growth Measure 1.4:** In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the Reading Comprehension section of the NWEA MAP assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75. **Math Growth Measure 2.3:** In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the mathematics section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75. **Science Growth Measure 3.3:** In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the science section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75. **Social Studies Growth Measure 4.3:** As a suggestion from Jeff McCann at Rutherford County Schools, we will negotiate our mission-specific goal for Social Studies during the process of authorization negotiations, which gives us the opportunity to make more informed and intentional revisions in partnership with Rutherford County Schools.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	

• The goal must include quantitative data. This goal cannot be qualitative or subjective, including items such as survey data or scholar statements.
 	
The proposed goal must include outcomes, predetermined metrics, and progress.
• The goal must be aligned to the mission of the school as outlined within the charter application.
• The goal must not include metrics or assessments already utilized within the performance framework such as TCAP/TNReady achievement scores, TVAAS, or chronic absenteeism.
• The goal must include pre-determined metrics to measure scholar success toward the mission. These metrics are not flexible and cannot change year over year to ensure comparison. Some metrics can include:
  ○ Nationally normed internal assessment data (e.g., NWEA MAP)
  ○ Aligned End of Course Assessments (not tied to state testing)
  ○ ACT Scores/SAT Scores
  ○ Scholar performance rubrics
  ○ Curriculum-based measurements or evaluations
• Schools must report on progress within the metrics toward the mission-specific goal. This must be demonstrated through aggregated (not raw) data and be clearly reported to the LEA. The school must report accurate data and determine whether they are meeting, exceeding, or not meeting their goal.	

Comparative Performance (40%)	

Comparison of charter performance to the LEA average allows for the evaluation of whether the charter school is providing a better option for scholars. Comparative achievement will be measured by evaluating the percentage of scholars who scored "met or exceeded expectations" on the state assessments at the charter school, as compared to the LEA average.
• In Grades 3-8, an average percent "met expectations"" or "exceeded expectations" of all Grades will be calculated for each tested subject.
  ○ This average will be calculated by taking the total number of scholars scoring "met or exceeded expectations" and dividing it by the total number of scholars who took the test in Grades 3-8.
• In high school, an average percent "met or exceeded expectations" will be calculated for End-of-Course (EOC) assessments in English I, and II, Algebra or Integrated math I, Geometry or Integrated math II, Algebra II or Integrated math III, Biology, and U.S. History.
  ○ This average will be calculated by taking the total number of scholars scoring "met or exceeded expectations" and dividing it by the total number of scholars who took the tests, which will be grouped by subject.
	English/Language Arts Comparative Measure 1.3: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who attend for four consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
	
	Math Comparative Measure 2.2: All scholars who have attended for three consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have attended for four consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	
○ EOC assessments will be grouped by subject in the following way: ▪ ELA: English I and II ▪ Math: Algebra or Integrated Math I, Geometry or Integrated Math II, Algebra II or Integrated Math III ▪ Science: Biology ▪ Social Studies: U.S. History Please Note: If a school is not being tested in certain subject areas, the total weight will be reallocated equally among the total tested subject areas.	Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee. **Science Comparative Measure 3.2:** In each testing year, scholars who have attended for three consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for four consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee. Scholars who have attended for seven or more consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that equals or exceeds the top 10% of schools in Tennessee. **Social Studies Comparative Measure 4.2:** Scholars who have attended for three consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for four consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for five consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
Enrollment percentages for each subgroup defined above will be included in the district's annual reporting for each school. If the school's scholar count for any individual subgroup is less than 8 scholars per grade level, or 30 for a fully built out school of four tested grade levels, schools will not be held accountable due to statistical validity. In this instance, the individual subgroup indicator(s) will be suppressed and marked on the framework as "**", and the school will be held harmless for the specific subgroup(s). The corresponding weight(s) will be reallocated to the overall school to district comparison (up to 20%). • Additionally, if LEA proficiency data for a particular subgroup falls below 1%, requiring suppression, the school will be compared to a district score of 0.9% for that subgroup for comparison purposes. If a school's data is suppressed publicly below 5%, the school will still be held accountable to the comparison, however the actual score will be suppressed in public reporting. • If a school has a proficiency score of zero for a particular subgroup, they cannot meet the standard, even if it falls within three percent of the resident district. A school must have a proficiency score above zero percent to qualify for this indicator.	**Projected Number of Scholars Identified as Economically Disadvantaged by year (70%).** • Year 1 (192 in Grades K-1): 135 • Year 2 (288 in Grades K-2): 202 • Year 3 (384 in grade K-3): 269 • Year 4 (480 in Grades K-4): 336 • Year 5 (576 in Grades K-5): 403 • Year 6 (672 in Grades K-6): 470 • Year 7 (768 in Grades K-7): 538 • Year 8 (864 in Grades K-8): 605 **Projected Number of Scholars Identified as Scholars with Disabilities by year (25%).** • Year 1 (192 in Grades K-1): 48 • Year 2 (288 in Grades K-2): 72 • Year 3 (384 in Grades K-3): 96 • Year 4 (480 in Grades K-4): 120 • Year 5 (576 in Grades K-5): 144 • Year 6 (672 in Grades K-6): 168 • Year 7 (768 in Grades K-7): 192 • Year 8 (864 in Grades K-8): 216 **Projected Number of Scholars Identified as ELs by year (35%).** • Year 1 (192 in Grades K-1): 67

	• Year 2 (288 in Grades K-2): 101 • Year 3 (384 in Grades K-3): 134 • Year 4 (480 in Grades K-4): 168 • Year 5 (576 in Grades K-5): 201 • Year 6 (672 in Grades K-6): 235 • Year 7 (768 in Grades K-7): 269 • Year 8 (864 in Grades K-8): 302
Overall TVAAS Composite Index (15% to 25%)	
The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) measures scholar growth year over year, regardless if the scholar demonstrates Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance on the state assessment. In calculating a TVAAS score, a scholar's performance is compared relative to the performance of his or her peers who have performed similarly on past assessments. Please Note: If a school does not have a TVAAS score, the weight will be reallocated evenly amongst the other indicators in the academic section.	At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for three consecutive years- including scholars identified as scholars with disabilities, scholars identified as ELs, scholars with a 504 Plan, and at-risk scholars- will demonstrate growth as evidenced by TVAAS expected growth effectiveness levels in English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies as follows: • **Level 5:** Significant evidence that the scholars made more growth than expected. • **Level 4:** Moderate evidence that the scholars made more growth than expected. • **Level 3:** Evidence that the scholars made growth as expected.

As mentioned in Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s annual and long-term academic goals on how they align with the model performance framework of the Tennessee Department of Education and Rutherford County Schools, these goals also align with the needs of our targeted communities of La Vergne and Smyrna. Specifically, our proposed goals are established to exceed the current level of performance of schools in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities, defined by the performance framework and outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Current Average Proficiency vs. Proposed Proficiency Goals

Current Average Proficiency Levels	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Proposed Goals
La Vergne and Smyrna Schools' Current Average Performance in English/Language Arts • Elementary Schools: 38.8% • Middle Schools: 31.2% • High Schools: 45% • Specialty Schools: 52.3%	**English/Language Arts Absolute Measure 1.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will read on or above grade level after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. **English/Language Arts Comparative Measure 1.3:** Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
	Math Absolute Measure 2.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	
La Vergne and Smyrna Schools' Current Average Performance in Math • Elementary Schools: 40.1% • Middle Schools: 38.5% • High Schools: 27.7% • Specialty Schools: 47%	grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. The proficiency rate of scholars in Grade 8 taking the Grade 8 TNReady math assessment or eligible scholars taking the Integrated math I EOC assessment will meet or exceed the proficiency rate of the highest-performing district in Tennessee up to 85%. **Math Comparative Measure 2.2:** All scholars who have attended for three consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
La Vergne and Smyrna Schools' Current Average Performance in Science • Elementary Schools: 41.8% • Middle Schools: 40.3% • High Schools: 47.3% • Specialty Schools: 52.7%	**Science Absolute Measure 3.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science with the reporting category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. Our scholars in Grade 8 who have attended for at least for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain a score on the science section of the ACT Aspire in the 70th percentile or greater. **Science Comparative Measure 3.2:** In each testing year, scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee. Scholars who have attended for 7 or more consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that equals or exceeds the top 10% of schools in Tennessee.
La Vergne and Smyrna Schools' Current Average Performance in Social Studies • Elementary Schools: N/A • Middle Schools: 48.3% • High Schools: 40.3% • Specialty Schools: 48.7%	**Social Studies Absolute Measure 4.1:** At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 4 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. **Social Studies Comparative Measure 4.2:** Scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on

	average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.

Rutherford County Schools Priorities. Rutherford County Schools identified five priorities in its Strategic Plan 2023-2028[43]. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes a school design that will align and respond to these priorities, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Priority Alignment

Rutherford County Schools Priorities	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Measures to Achieve Alignment
Priority 1: Provide early interventions that address scholar needs and support the whole child.	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to addressing scholar needs through early interventions that support the whole child. Our comprehensive approach ensures that students receive the academic and behavioral support necessary for success across all grade levels. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support across all grade levels, providing structured academic and behavioral interventions tailored to individual student needs. MTSS will ensure that every scholar receives appropriate support through a tiered approach: • **Tier 1:** High-quality core instruction and universal supports for all scholars. • **Tier 2:** Targeted interventions for scholars who require additional academic or behavioral assistance. • **Tier 3:** Intensive, individualized support for scholars with significant needs. We recognize the importance of clear and timely communication with families regarding their child's academic progress. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain an ongoing communication strategy and update our public-facing website with resources and frequently asked questions to ensure transparency and accessibility. To increase transparency and empower our families, our Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will lead our Family Advisory Council and Engagement, known as the FACE of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). This team will support in developing our public-facing family guides and resources, detailing information about our school. Understanding that our scholars may require varying levels of support at different stages, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adopt a staffing model that reflects our needs to ensure scholars receive the appropriate academic and social-emotional support at each grade level. Our instructional staff will include Licensed Teachers and Teachers-in-Residence, and we will also provide additional layers of support to our scholars; specifically, those with an IEP, ILP, or 504 Plan by providing prescribed services through our contacted services provider Project Play Therapy (see Section 1.8 for more details). Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will participate in ongoing professional learning and development related to de-escalation techniques and trauma-informed practices, facilitated by our Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement. This professional learning and development will equip our teachers, school leaders, and staff members with the tools to support positive behaviors and ensure that scholars feel known, loved, and respected as members of our school community. To reduce health-related barriers to learning, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement the Coordinated School Health program based on scholar and family needs. This initiative will ensure scholars and families have access to the wraparound services needed to address physical, emotional, and mental health needs in partnerships with local organizations. Recognizing the importance of a well-rounded education, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure that scholars have access to a rich Arts curriculum as we develop over time. At full scale, our goal is that when scholars transition into Grades 6-8, they will have opportunities to engage in visual arts, music, theater, dance, and media arts to enhance their creative and critical thinking skills.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)	
Priority 2: Increase achievement for all scholars by providing a high quality and equitable education.	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to providing a high-quality education that fosters academic excellence and prepares scholars for long-term success. Our approach is rooted in targeted instructional strategies, data-driven decision-making, and transparent communication with families. To ensure all scholars reach their highest potential, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement structured, high-impact academic interventions, including: • Blended learning intervention in English/Language Arts and Math. • Whole-class learning, small group learning, and independent learning with a strategic two-educator class model. • Engaging, skill-building opportunities that reinforce learning and prevent summer learning loss. • Weekly data meetings to analyze student performance data and implement instructional strategies to support both academic and behavioral needs. We will continuously evaluate and enhance our curricula to ensure they align with the Tennessee Academic Standards. As we develop over time, we will hire a Director of Academics who will play a critical role in shaping our instructional decisions with best practices and state standards.
Priority 3: Recruit, retain, and support highly effective employees for our growing and diverse scholar population.	Novus SMART Academy is dedicated to recruiting, retaining, and supporting high-performing teachers, school leaders, and staff members to serve our diverse scholar population. We will be known for our reputation as an agency of change, leading among the top 5% of schools in Tennessee and becoming the #1 charter school option for scholars and families in Rutherford County, Tennessee. We will aim to be recognized nationally as one of the best charter schools to work for, creating a safe, engaging, and fulfilling learning environment for all stakeholders. Teachers, school leaders, and staff members will have access to community circles, emotional resilience training, collaborative problem-solving. We will cultivate a culture that prioritizes well-being and professional fulfillment to retain high-performing staff. A structured compensation plan will attract and retain talented educators and staff members. We will invest in strategic marketing efforts to recruit and retain highly effective employees. We will also use tools that will support diverse recruitment efforts and streamline HR and payroll operations as prescribed by EdTec, our back-office services provider. We will implement best practices to enhance diversity in recruitment, hiring, and policy revision. We will provide training and support for our Teachers-in-Residence who want to be Licensed Teachers, and our Licensed Teachers who want to become teacher leaders and administrators. In partnership with local colleges and universities, and teacher preparation programs (i.e., Teach for America and Relay) we will provide opportunities to join our dynamic team to support our school community.
Priority 4: Create efficient operations that optimize the investment in our scholars.	We see Rutherford County Schools' county-wide rezoning plan as an opportunity to partner with the district to provide an additional high-quality school option that keeps scholars and families closer to their preferred school communities. This collaboration offers scholars a unique learning experience not available in their current schools or newly zoned school assignments. Operational Efficiency & Payroll System Transition: We will ensure a smooth payroll system to align with staff needs and requirements. Financial processes will be maintained in accordance with upgraded policies and procedures to ensure compliance and efficiency. Collaboration with our employee lifecycle vendor will help automate and streamline HR and Finance transitions, improving overall workflow. Collaborative professional learning and development among our Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Operation and Finance and Board of Directors will be conducted to facilitate seamless data flow, provide technology support, and enhance automation effectiveness. Fiscal Training & Financial Transparency: Providing fiscal professional learning and development to our Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Operation and

	Finance and Board of Directors will increase our financial literacy and capacity. Additionally, our Finance Committee will be available to address financial operations inquiries, ensuring enhanced understanding and engagement across all levels of the organization. Enhancing Communication & Digital Engagement: Improvements to our school website will be made to provide necessary information needed by our new and returning scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members. We will expand our social media communication channels and provide updates on a regular cadence. Furthermore, an internal intranet will be launched to facilitate streamlined internal communications, integrating seamlessly for ease of use. Administrative Procedures & Contract Management: All administrative procedures will be updated and published, ensuring accessibility for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members through our website. We will also have a contract management system to track and maintain contracts and memorandums of understanding (MOU), providing centralized access and ensuring compliance tracking. Staffing Structure & Efficiency Improvements: A thorough analysis of staffing structures will be conducted annually to identify opportunities for efficiency and improvement. To support this initiative, we will leverage the expertise of EdTec to assess pay structures and provide recommendations for optimization. Resources will be allocated, and strategies will be developed to address identified areas for improvement, ensuring effective staff deployment.
Priority 5: Ensure all facilities provide a safe and equitable space for our district to learn and grow.	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to providing a safe and innovative learning environment that fosters academic excellence and personal growth. Our facilities will ensure all classroom spaces are optimal for high-quality learning Spaces, maintaining our 1:12 teacher-to-scholar ratio to ensure each scholar is known, loved, and respected. We will also sustain high-quality Informational Technology systems to support our academic programming with 1:1 technology device access and digital learning experiences for our scholars. We will partner with Building Hope, Charter School Growth Fund, and other organizations that support charter school facilities acquisition to strategically allocate funding towards capital projects that enhance our school facilities. This strategy will prioritize scholar safety and well-being by assessing and implementing facilities upgrades to ensure a safe learning environment. Our Development Committee will lead our efforts in expanding our revenue streams for facilities improvements as we grow by securing funding for necessary maintenance projects and long-term sustainability of our facilities.

Aligned to Priority 4 and Priority 5, Rutherford County is facing a challenge of school overcrowding. According to Dr. Jimmy Sullivan, the Rutherford County Schools' Director of Schools, more than 50,000 scholars are enrolled in Rutherford County Schools, which represents an increase of over 20,000 scholars in the past 18 years, an average of 1,000 additional scholars each year[44]. Rutherford County Schools has expressed that the County Commissioners and funding bodies of Rutherford County have fully supported and approved additions to existing school buildings and new school building projects in the past, but now the most prudent fiscal move would be to rezone schools and commit to a 5-year plan to increase revenue up to $750 million before beginning new school building projects.

Rutherford County Schools approved the county-wide rezoning plan and reassigned some scholars and families to available seats in different schools to ensure scholars can learn in brick-and-mortar school buildings and not in portable classrooms on school campuses. These changes may cause several families the inconvenience of driving further to newly assigned schools, and eliminating the use of portable classrooms may not be possible as Rutherford County continues to grow rapidly. To date, three charter schools have been approved to offer additional options to scholars and families beginning in August 2024. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes to partner with Rutherford County Schools to establish an additional high-quality public charter school option for scholars and families in Grades K-8 in the communities of La Vergne and Smyrna. Our will support scholars' and families' choice and needs with high-quality academic instruction that will prepare the whole child for their chosen college and career paths.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.1c: Describe the process for setting, monitoring, and revising goals. Detail how progress toward the goals is measured.

Achieving Our Mission. Achieving the mission at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will mean all scholars in Grades K-8 receive access to high-quality academic instruction, regardless of their present level of academic performance, behavior, mindsets, socioeconomic status, cultural background, or differences. All scholars will thrive by gaining the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to excel in college, careers, and life, while making a positive impact on society. Using our SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework and two-educator classroom model, we will provide high-quality academic instruction to ensure scholar success. To maximize instructional time, scholars will benefit from an extended school day on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays to enhance learning opportunities, address academic and behavior gaps, and support scholars in meeting rigorous academic goals. Professional learning and development for staff will be incorporated on Wednesdays with early release for scholars at 1:45 PM to ensure the holistic growth of our school community.

Goal Setting, Monitoring, and Revising Process. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has established three types of goals: absolute, comparative, and growth. These goals will ensure the comprehensive measurement of our academic progress as follows:

- **Absolute Measures.** These goals define the explicit progress we aim to achieve each year, independent of comparative data from other schools. For instance, we will measure the percentage of scholars who achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on the TCAP/TNReady assessments. Each year, we expect scholars' proficiency to increase as they progress through our academic program. These goals align with state expectations for proficiency improvement.
- **Comparative Measures.** These goals evaluate scholar achievement relative to surrounding schools and the district, ensuring that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) delivers on its promise of being a high-quality educational option. By consistently outperforming nearby schools, we will demonstrate the strength of our academic program and its value to the community.
- **Growth Measures.** These goals track individual scholar progress over time, particularly addressing gaps in Kindergarten (and First Grade in Year 1) readiness, language acquisition, and other barriers. Scholars will be expected to grow faster than national norms to close achievement gaps and reach grade-level performance. These measures ensure all scholars, regardless of starting point, experience consistent academic advancement.

Progress Measurement and Monitoring. To assess progress toward these goals, we will do the following:

- **Ongoing Assessments:** Teachers will conduct frequent formative and summative assessments, such as interim assessments, unit assessments, daily exit tickets, and progress monitoring and screenings to monitor academic progress in real time.
- **Data Dashboards:** Academic progress will be compiled into our schoolwide academic dashboard, as well as teachers' individual classroom data dashboards. This data will provide visual insights into proficiency, comparative performance, and growth daily.
- **Monthly Reporting:** The Proposed Executive Director will present progress updates to the Board of Directors at monthly meetings, with oversight by the Academics Chair and Academics Committee.
- **Corrective Action Plans:** If progress is lagging with any of schoolwide or organizational goals, the Proposed Executive Director will devise and present a detailed plan to implement for improvement, including specific, measurable, actionable steps for school-based leadership teachers and staff.

Annual Review and Goal Revision. The Proposed Executive Director, in collaboration with the Academics Committee, will review and adjust goals annually before the start of the upcoming school year. Adjustments will ensure we are aligned to the Tennessee Academic Standards, state testing changes, and the evolving needs of our scholars. Goals will never be revised to lower expectations but will increase when they are consistently met. The Board of Directors will review and vote on any revisions to our goals to ensure quality programming and accountability.

Corrective Action and Accountability. If performance falls below district or state expectations:

1. The Board will devise a corrective action plan based on accountability data.
2. The Proposed Executive Director will lead the implementation of this plan, with progress monitored biweekly and reported monthly.
3. If sufficient progress is not achieved within four months, the Board will convene a Task Force to support improvement efforts more aggressively.
4. At the end of the academic year, the Board will evaluate the Proposed Executive Director's leadership and will consider making staffing changes if goals remain unmet.

Support for Leadership and Instruction. The Proposed Executive Director will receive ongoing coaching and professional learning and development through BES Follow-On Support and the Charter School Growth Fund as a Portfolio Member.

Section 1.1 – School Mission and Goals (Required for All Sponsors)

These partnerships will provide actionable feedback, access to resources, and strategies to proactively address academic challenges.

Instructional Strategies to Support Goals. To remediate scholars' academic underperformance and learning loss, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement a rigorous, data-driven instructional model. Our approach emphasizes small group instruction for English/Language Arts and mathematics in Grades K-8 to provide all scholars with a firm foundation in core subjects. These teacher-led groups will utilize blended learning strategies, integrating adaptive, computer-based programming that responds to each scholar's unique needs. Scholars will also engage in blended learning through personalized learning paths, MTSS-Academics, and scholars in our special education program will receive layered interventions that are fully aligned to their IEPs, ILPs, or 504 Plans.

Data-Driven Instruction and Intervention. Scholars struggling with learning loss or performing at Below Expectations (Level 1) or Approaching Expectations (Level 2) will be quickly identified through frequent internal assessments. Data-driven instruction and blended learning during English/Language Arts and math blocks will allow us to assign scholars to leveled small groups that meet their specific needs. In Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will oversee data analysis and convene weekly data meetings with all instructional staff after to determine next steps. This approach ensures that interventions remain responsive, rigorous, and results oriented.

Technology Integration. During MTSS-Academics blocks, instructional resources like IXL and Imagine MyPath (for ELs) will be utilized for personalized, adaptive learning. These instructional resources will complement teacher-led interventions and provide additional support during English/Language Arts and math blocks. Progress monitoring for Tier II scholars will occur biweekly and weekly for Tier III scholars, with intervention adjustments made based on performance trends.

IXL and the Science of Reading. IXL's ELA curriculum is designed using research-based best practices for effective early literacy instruction[45]. Scholars will be supported with instant feedback, video tutorials, and professionally recorded audio as they build knowledge and fluency at their own pace using the fundamental components of reading as follows:

- Phonological and Phonemic Awareness: IXL's foundational reading skills teach scholars how to identify rhymes and syllables as well as how to recognize, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in words. The video tutorials use multisensory instruction to help scholars understand how words are made up of parts, and teachers show scholars how to feel what their mouths are doing to help them identify sounds. Scholars can then work through problems independently, using IXL's professionally recorded audio, which allows them to hear the words and sounds they are asked to identify.
- Systematic and Structured Phonics Instruction: IXL's phonics skills follow a logical sequence from simple to more complex, allowing scholars to work through concepts in a systematic way. These skills cover everything from consonant sounds and short vowels to more advanced concepts like diphthongs, R-controlled vowels, and multisyllabic words. IXL's video tutorials provide explicit instruction on all phonics concepts in an appropriate, engaging, and supportive way.
- Fluency: Through a variety of "read-alone" skills, featuring simple literary and informational texts, beginning readers can practice reading independently to build fluency. These texts offer audio support for the instructions, questions, and answers, but not for the main texts. The sight word skills teach scholars to recognize high-frequency words quickly and effortlessly. The accompanying video tutorials explicitly teach scholars how to decode each word.
- Vocabulary: IXL's vocabulary skills teach scholars key word-learning strategies, like using word parts or context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words, that help them build grade-appropriate vocabulary and bolster their reading comprehension.

IXL and Math. To build lasting knowledge, scholars need to attain conceptual understanding first, going beyond simply discerning math facts to understanding why and how math works. IXL skills focus on conceptual understanding illuminating why certain methods work, giving scholars the ability to apply concepts and explain their reasoning later[46]. From there, procedural fluency leverages deep conceptual understanding to build facility with facts and procedures, and contextual application encourages scholars to create strategies for solving complex problems in multiple contexts. IXL offers a wide range of skills supporting all these aspects so scholars progress seamlessly and achieve rigor in math as follows:

- Conceptual Understanding: To develop conceptual knowledge of topics, such as subtraction and fractions, scholars practice IXL skills involving area models, linked cubes, number lines, ten frames, and many other models. Each question adjusts in difficulty based on the scholar's level of understanding, so learners always work on questions perfectly suited for them. Scholars also receive immediate feedback when they answer a question incorrectly, ensuring they gain in-depth understanding of foundational pieces of each topic before moving on.
- Procedural Fluency: Scholars need ample opportunity to practice procedural skills to achieve fluency, but if teachers cannot match scholars to skills that fit their knowledge levels, practice can start to feel a lot like "drill and kill" work. IXL goes beyond rote skill practice by offering built-in differentiation. IXL skills are scaffolded so that scholars effectively build knowledge from easier to more complex concepts. Questions are adaptive, ensuring that scholars are always working at the correct difficulty level and on the right concept. And if scholars need support, IXL offers in-skill recommendations where scholars can pause and build up additional foundational knowledge.

- Contextual Application: Scholars will tie together all the strategies they have learned while practicing contextual application skills. For example, IXL's word problems combine multi-step questions with real-world examples. In addition, IXL checkpoint skills help scholars strategically apply multiple concepts when working through rigorous questions, ultimately preparing them for higher achievement on standardized assessments. If scholars demonstrate gaps in knowledge, IXL provides learners the exact foundational skills that will close them.

Imagine MyPath and the Science of Reading. Like IXL for English/Language Arts, Imagine MyPath gradually increases text complexity to move scholars into grade-level reading. The platform also uses direct instruction videos to model metacognitive reading strategies in over 60 scholar-friendly languages. Scholars performing two or more grade levels below their current grade level receive age-appropriate instruction in phonics, fluency, and vocabulary development, which is the core foundation of science of reading research[47].

Imagine MyPath and Math. Like IXL for Math, Imagine MyPath prepares scholars for high-level problem solving by strengthening their foundational skills and conceptual understanding. The platform also efficiently scaffolds scholars up to grade level by prioritizing domain-specific critical skills based on each scholar's data[48].

MTSS-Academics Curriculum. For Grades K-5, we will use the Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum that integrates research around personalized best practices and instructional strategies based on the science of reading using authentic to focus on letter recognition, letter sounds, phonological awareness, decoding skills, vowel team, blends and digraph recognition, word reading fluency, writing and expression, reading fluency and accuracy applying decoding skills[49]. This curriculum is in alignment with the deficit areas being progress monitored through FastBridge.

For Grades 6-8, we will use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180 curriculum that integrates research around personalized best practices, adaptive technology, instructional strategies based on the science of reading, and scaffolded support for reading independently. Our scholars will receive systematic, direct instruction and practice their foundational literacy skills to develop their fluency, expand vocabulary and strengthen comprehension skills to become proficient, skillful readers[74]. This curriculum is in alignment with the deficit areas being progress monitored through FastBridge[50].

Progress Monitoring and Addressing Scholar Deficits. Effective progress monitoring requires different tools than those used for universal screening. While computer adaptive tests (**CATs**) are ideal for screening due to their ability to measure broad skills, progress monitoring measures must be highly sensitive to small amounts of growth and be able to reliably measure that growth quickly. FastBridge only uses curriculum-based measures (CBMs) for progress monitoring[51]. We will use FastBridge as follows:

1. Weekly or biweekly assessment of specific skills.
2. 1:1 administration to observe scholar performance with at least 18 data points over 9 weeks.
3. Up to 5 minutes per scholar to complete.

MTSS-Academics Instructional Minutes

- Base Tier II Requirements for Instruction
  - 30 minutes of instruction 3 times per week in Grades K-5 with a 1:3 ratio.
  - 30 minutes of instruction 3 times per week in Grades 6-8 with a 1:4 ratio.
- Base Tier III Requirements for Instruction
  - At least 40 minutes of instruction daily in Grades K-5 with a 1:3 ratio.
  - At least 45 minutes of instruction daily in Grades 6-8 with a 1:4 ratio.
- Our MTSS-Academics Plan
  - We will provide 60 minutes of MTSS-Academics instruction on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in Grades K-8.
  - We will provide blended learning intervention using IXL during the English/Language Arts block and math block on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, which will exceed the number of required minutes for MTSS-Academics instruction per week.
  - Progress monitoring will take place on Wednesdays during MTSS-Academics. Scholars will use IXL for blended learning interventions on Wednesdays, which will allow teachers to facilitate 1:1 progress monitoring and/or screenings appropriately while scholars work independently (see Attachment B for the Daily Schedule).

Section 1.1d: Describe any innovative or unique features of the proposed school or education model, and detail how these unique features align with the mission of the school.

SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework. The SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework is the cornerstone of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s educational philosophy, designed to integrate Science, Math, Arts/Electives, Research, and Technology into a cohesive, interdisciplinary learning experience. This framework emphasizes real-world applications, fostering curiosity and creativity among scholars. Subjects are interconnected to provide scholars with a comprehensive understanding of concepts and their practical relevance. Scholars engage in experiments, projects, and activities that

require critical thinking and collaboration. Modern tools and digital platforms are incorporated into daily instruction to prepare scholars for the demands of a technologically-advanced world. This framework supports our mission by fostering relentless ambition and a strong foundation for college and career readiness, beginning in Kindergarten. It cultivates lifelong learners equipped with the skills to succeed academically and beyond.

College and Career Exploration. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will introduce College and Career Exploration as early as Kindergarten, embedding career-focused education throughout the K-8 experience. Scholars will be exposed to diverse career paths and the necessary steps to achieve their goals through interactive lessons, guest speakers, and field experiences. In Grades K-5, scholars will begin exploring professions through age-appropriate activities. Scholars will also participate in workshops on communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. In Grades 6-8, scholars will develop personalized academic and career plans, aligning their interests with future goals. By beginning college and career exploration early, scholars will develop a relentless drive for success and a clear understanding of the steps needed to achieve their goals. This directly supports our commitment to producing global achievers.

Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Well-Being. Character Education is central to the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) experience, facilitated through a robust SEL and well-being program using the CharacterStrong curriculum. This program instills ethical values and life skills to support scholars in becoming compassionate, resilient citizens and leaders. Daily morning advisory sessions will focus on self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy through the lens of our Noble Core Values. Scholars and staff will also engage in collaborative problem-solving and relationship-building activities. Individualized MTSS-Behavior plans will address specific needs of scholars who demonstrate Tier II and/or Tier III behaviors to promote positive development and growth. This program will nurture scholars' personal growth, equipping them with the character and resilience necessary to succeed academically and contribute positively to their communities.

Structured English Immersion Program. The SEI Program will ensure that scholars identified as English Learners (ELs) achieve language development and proficiency while excelling in academic content. ELs will receive SEI support with a Licensed ESL Teacher and a Teacher-in-Residence in the two-educator classroom based on their English proficiency levels. In the inclusion classroom, English language development will be embedded into core academic subjects for ELs who are not eligible to be enrolled in the SEI program. Regular assessments will track ELs' language development and academic growth over time. By providing access to high-quality education, the SEI program and inclusion classroom setting, respectively, will empower EL scholars to overcome academic barriers, ensuring they are prepared for their chosen college and career paths as well.

Responding to Community Needs. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s establishment aligns with Rutherford County Schools' needs by offering an additional high-quality school option that will help to mitigate some overcrowding in school and provides a unique learning environment tailored to scholars and families preferences. With Rutherford County Schools' ongoing school rezoning plans, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure our location caters to scholars and families who desire to be close to their preferred school communities. Our curriculum will also reflect the diverse backgrounds of the scholar body., and we will engage in regular communication and involvement opportunities to ensure families are active partners in their children's education. By addressing local educational needs and fostering strong family partnerships, the academy reinforces its vision of producing global achievers who thrive academically and socially.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.2a: Describe the academic focus for the proposed school.

SMART-Integrated Curriculum Framework. Our SMART-Integrated Curriculum Framework includes Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology. Science and Math instruction will focus on hands-on experimentation and real-world problem-solving, equipping scholars with analytical and critical-thinking skills. As we develop overtime, Arts/Electives, encompassing visual, performing, and digital media, will be seamlessly woven into the curriculum to foster creativity and self-expression. Scholars will create art pieces, perform theatrical plays, and engage with digital design projects that enhance their understanding of core academic concepts. Research in English/Language Arts and Social Studies will ignite intellectual curiosity and cultivate a lifelong love for learning. Scholars will learn how to ask meaningful questions, gather data, and present findings effectively. Technology through digital literacy and technological fluency are embedded in daily lessons to prepare scholars for innovation-driven futures. Scholars will use technology to access information, collaborate with peers, and develop solutions to complex problems. This integration ensures that technology is not just a tool but a fundamental part of the learning process.

College and Career Exploration. College and career exploration will begin in Kindergarten. Through IBL and PBL, scholars will gain exposure to the importance of education in shaping their futures. In Grades K-2, scholars will explore foundational questions and learn about local institutions and build career vocabulary. In Grades 3-5, scholars will delve into hands-on projects that simulate real-world challenges. In Grades 6-8, scholars will participate in advanced projects and career simulations, such as coding applications, engineering prototypes, and creating digital art portfolios, aligned with their interests and emerging career aspirations.

Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and WEL-Being. SEL is a cornerstone of scholar success at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). We will prioritize emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills through structured SEL activities supported by *CharacterStrong*. *CharacterStrong's* curricula and training will ensure our approach is intentional, research-based, and effective in addressing the holistic needs of our scholars. We prioritize emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills through structured SEL activities. Morning meetings will focus on empathy, gratitude, and self-regulation. Weekly character education lessons using the *CharacterStrong* curriculum will emphasize the Novus Core Values and celebrate their connection to academic and personal achievements. Through ABL, scholars' unique strengths are leveraged to build confidence and a growth mindset.

Structured English Immersion Program. Our Structured English Immersion program is designed to support ELs in achieving successful academic outcomes by fostering language acquisition and development. The program focuses on developmentally appropriate strategies that align with Tennessee Department of Education guidelines, ensuring English learners attain proficiency and thrive academically. In Grades K-2, scholars will build a strong foundation in English through targeted instruction in vocabulary, oral language development, phonemic awareness, and fluency. Strategies such as sentence frames, visual prompts, and interactive activities will be used to develop early literacy and communication skills. Successful outcomes include the ability to identify and use grade-level vocabulary, demonstrate phonemic awareness, and engage in basic oral language exchanges. In Grades 3-5, instruction will emphasize academic vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension strategies to help scholars decode, analyze, and understand texts. Scaffolded support will enable scholars to develop higher-order thinking and critical analysis skills. Successful outcomes include the ability to comprehend grade-level texts, apply academic vocabulary across content areas, and construct coherent written and oral responses. In Grades 6-8, advanced grammar structures, morphology, and syntax will be integrated into instruction to enhance academic discourse and comprehension of complex texts. Scholars will engage in activities that promote critical thinking, advanced writing skills, and academic collaboration.

Academic Rigor and Remediation. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s academic program is designed to ensure scholars achieve grade-level proficiency and beyond, with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. High-quality instruction in foundational skills is paired with research-based teaching strategies drawn from proven school models such as Valor Collegiate Academies[52] and Purpose Preparatory Academy[53], both ranked in the top 5% of Tennessee schools. Our scholars will build strong decoding, comprehension, and mathematical problem-solving skills. Rigorous curricula will ensure year-to-year academic growth. Extended time for literacy and math, along with daily support through MTSS-Academics, will close achievement gaps and provide targeted interventions for struggling learners.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Figures 5-10 provides a visual of our year-long curriculum scope and sequence to demonstrate how our academic focus areas function together.

Figure 5 - Kindergarten College and Career Exploration, Character Education, and Research SMART Block: English/Language Arts

		August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May				June
		3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-4		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	1-2
Instructional Days		5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
	College & Career Exploration	August: Big Dreams Begin Here Unit Title: "Dreaming Big" Goals: Understand what it means to have a dream for the future. Recognize that everyone can achieve their goals with effort. Key Activities: Read "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" by Dr. Seuss. Create an "All About Me" poster with students' interests and dreams. Introduce a "Dream Wall" where students can add their aspirations throughout the year.				September: Community Helpers Unit Title: "Helping Our Community" Goals: Identify community helpers and their roles. Understand how they keep communities running smoothly. Key Activities: Invite guest speakers (e.g., firefighters, police officers, librarians). Role-play community helper jobs using costumes and props. Explore tools of different professions through hands-on activities.				October: Exploring Workplaces Unit Title: "Where People Work" Goals: Learn about various workplaces and their functions. Build awareness of the diversity of work environments. Key Activities: Pretend field trips to workplaces (e.g., hospital, farm, office). Create workplace models using craft materials. Discuss what students see in their community and where their family members work.				November: Building and Creating Unit Title: "Builders and Makers" Goals: Explore careers in construction, design, and engineering. Develop problem-solving and creativity skills. Key Activities: Build structures using blocks, Legos, or recycled materials. Design a "dream home" or "classroom of the future." Share famous landmarks and the people who designed and built them.				December: Creativity in Careers Unit Title: "Imagine That!" Goals: Learn about artistic and creative professions. Encourage self-expression through art, music, and storytelling. Key Activities: Explore careers like artist, musician, and author through books and activities. Create a class art gallery featuring students' work. Collaborate on writing and illustrating a class storybook.				January: Science and Nature Unit Title: "Little Scientists" Goals: Introduce careers in science and nature. Foster curiosity about the natural world. Key Activities: Conduct simple experiments, like growing plants or exploring water cycles. Learn about scientists, astronauts, and meteorologists. Take a nature walk to observe and classify items.				February: Caring Careers Unit Title: "Helping Hands and Healing Hearts" Goals: Explore roles that focus on health, safety, and helping others. Discuss kindness and responsibility. Key Activities: Set up a pretend doctor or vet clinic in the classroom. Meet a paramedic, nurse, or dentist and learn about their work. Create posters on staying healthy and safe.				March: Technology and Innovation Unit Title: "Inventors and Innovators" Goals: Learn about careers in technology and invention. Understand how innovation helps solve problems. Key Activities: Explore simple coding with apps or toys. Build and test a simple machine using kits or recycled materials. Learn about famous inventors and their creations.				April: Animal Helpers Unit Title: "Caring for Creatures Big and Small" Goals: Introduce careers involving animals. Foster empathy and responsibility for living things. Key Activities: Pretend play as veterinarians or zookeepers. Study animal habitats and discuss animal care. Visit a pet store, farm, or local zoo (real or virtual).				May-June: College Exploration and Year-End Celebration Unit Title: "College Dreams and Career Showcases" Goals: Introduce the concept of college as a place to learn and grow. Reflect on the year's learning and celebrate students' aspirations. Key Activities: Discuss what college is and how it helps people prepare for careers. Create a "When I Grow Up" showcase where students dress as their favorite career. Reflect on students' dreams and goals by adding to their "Dream Wall."				
	Character Education	August: Building Our Classroom Community Focus: Introduction to SEL & CPS Skills: Recognizing and naming emotions, understanding classroom rules, fostering a sense of belonging. Activities: Read-aloud: "Our Class is a Family" by Shannon Olsen. Emotion charades: Practice identifying emotions using facial expressions. Collaborative activity: Create a class promise or rules poster. Introduce a calm-down corner.				September: Understanding Emotions Focus: Identifying and expressing feelings Skills: Emotion vocabulary, self-awareness, self-expression. Activities: Storytime: "The Way I Feel" by Janan Cain. Emotion sorting game with emoji cards. Art: Draw a picture of how you feel today and explain it to a peer. Introduce "Emotion Check-In" chart for daily use.				October: Empathy and Kindness Focus: Understanding and responding to others' feelings Skills: Empathy, perspective-taking, kindness. Activities: Read-aloud: "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" by Carol McCloud. Kindness tree: Add a leaf for every act of kindness. Role-play: Practice scenarios of helping friends who feel sad or mad. Collaborative problem-solving circle: Discuss and solve hypothetical friendship challenges.				November: Cooperation and Teamwork Focus: Working together and respecting others Skills: Sharing, taking turns, active listening. Activities: Storytime: "Swimmy" by Leo Lionni. Group project: Build a tower or create a mural together. Game: "Pass the Hoop" without breaking a human chain. Introduce "Listening Ears" visual reminder during discussions.				December: Self-Control and Patience Focus: Managing impulses and waiting your turn Skills: Self-regulation, delayed gratification. Activities: Read-aloud: "Waiting Is Not Easy!" by Mo Willems. Play a game like "Red Light, Green Light" to practice self-control. Create a "Patience Jar" to visually count down waiting time. Reflect on moments when it was hard to wait and what helped.				January: Problem-Solving Focus: Resolving conflicts peacefully Skills: Identifying problems, brainstorming solutions, compromise. Activities: Storytime: "What Should Danny Do?" by Gantt & Adir Levy. Introduce a problem-solving wheel with visual choices (e.g., share, trade, take turns). Practice problem-solving using puppet role-plays. Collaborative activity: Solve a puzzle as a team.				February: Respect and Inclusion Focus: Appreciating differences and valuing others Skills: Respect, inclusion, fairness. Activities: Read-aloud: "The Big Umbrella" by Amy June Bates. Create "All About Me" posters to celebrate uniqueness. Group game: "Same and Different" (identify similarities and differences among peers). Role-play: How to include someone in play.				March: Responsibility Focus: Taking ownership of actions and tasks Skills: Accountability, follow-through. Activities: Storytime: "I Just Forgot" by Mercer Mayer. Create a classroom responsibility chart. Practice cleaning up after centers or snack time. Discuss "What does being responsible look like?"				April: Perseverance Focus: Trying hard even when things are difficult Skills: Resilience, problem-solving, persistence. Activities: Read-aloud: "The Little Engine That Could" by Watty Piper. Create a "Keep Going" mantra as a class. Group activity: Build something with blocks that requires trial and error. Reflect: Share moments when they kept trying and succeeded.				May-June: Gratitude and Reflection Focus: Being thankful and celebrating growth Skills: Gratitude, self-reflection, appreciation. Activities: Storytime: "Thank You, Omu!" by Oge Mora. Gratitude journal: Draw and share things they are thankful for. Create a "Kindergarten Memories" collage. Class celebration: Reflect on the year's growth and achievements.				
	Research SMART Block: English/Language Arts	August: Introduction to School and Learning Focus: Foundational Skills Phonological Awareness: Identifying and producing rhyming words. Print Concepts: Understanding book orientation and recognizing that print conveys meaning. Speaking & Listening: Classroom discussions about school routines. Vocabulary: School-related terms (teacher, friend, classroom). Literature: Read-alouds focusing on school and community (e.g., "The Kissing Hand"). Focus: Foundational Skills and Routines Standards: K.FL.PC.1: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. K.FL.VA.7a: Determine the meaning of unknown words with guidance. K.SL.CC.1: Participate in collaborative conversations about kindergarten topics. K.RL.KID.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.				September: Nursery Rhymes and Fables Focus: Story Elements Phonological Awareness: Segmenting and blending syllables. Phonics: Recognizing and naming uppercase and lowercase letters. Comprehension: Identifying characters, settings, and events. Writing: Drawing and labeling pictures about favorite nursery rhymes. Texts: Classic nursery rhymes and Aesop's fables. September: Nursery Rhymes and Fables Focus: Story Elements Standards: K.FL.PA.2a: Recognize and produce rhyming words. K.FL.PC.1b: Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters. K.RL.KID.2: Retell familiar stories, including key details. K.RL.KID.3: Identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.				October: The Five Senses Focus: Informational Text Phonological Awareness: Identifying initial sounds in words. Phonics: Introduction to short vowel sounds. Vocabulary: Words related to the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch). Comprehension: Using text features to gather information. Writing: Dictating sentences about sensory experiences. Texts: Informational books about the senses. October: The Five Senses Focus: Informational Text Standards: K.FL.PA.2d: Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds in CVC words. K.RI.KID.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. K.RI.CS.4: Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words in a text. K.W.TTP.1: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces.				November: Native Americans and Pilgrims Focus: Social Studies Integration Phonics: Beginning to blend consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. Vocabulary: Words related to Native American and Pilgrim life. Comprehension: Comparing and contrasting past and present. Writing: Creating simple sentences about Thanksgiving traditions. Texts: Stories and informational texts about Native American culture and the first Thanksgiving. November: Native Americans and Pilgrims Focus: Social Studies Integration Standards: K.FL.PA.2c: Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words. K.RI.KID.3: Describe the connection between two individuals, events, or ideas in a text. K.W.RBPK.7: Participate in shared research and writing projects. K.SL.PKI.4: Describe familiar people, places, and things, and provide additional detail.				December: Weather and Seasons Focus: Informational and Narrative Texts Phonics: Continued CVC word practice. Vocabulary: Weather-related terms (sunny, rainy, windy). Comprehension: Sequencing seasonal changes. Writing: Drawing and writing about favorite weather. Texts: Poems, stories, and informational books about weather. December: Weather and Seasons Focus: Informational and Narrative Texts Standards: K.FL.WC.4a: Demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. K.RL.CS.5: Recognize common types of texts (e.g., storybooks, poems). K.RL.IKI.9: Compare and contrast the adventures of characters in familiar stories. K.W.TTP.2: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts.				January: Kings, Queens, and Fairytales Focus: Imaginative Literature Phonics: Introducing digraphs (sh, th, ch). Vocabulary: Royal-themed words (castle, crown, kingdom). Comprehension: Retelling stories and identifying central messages. Writing: Creating a class fairytale with illustrations. Texts: "Cinderella," "The Three Little Pigs," and other classic tales. January: Kings, Queens, and Fairytales Focus: Imaginative Literature Standards: K.FL.WC.4b: Read common high-frequency words by sight. K.RL.CS.4: Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text. K.RL.CS.6: Identify the author and illustrator of a story and define their roles. K.W.TTP.3: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or sequence of events.				February: Community Helpers Focus: Informational Text Phonics: Long vowel introduction. Vocabulary: Community helper roles (firefighter, doctor, teacher). Comprehension: Asking and answering questions about text. Writing: Creating thank-you notes for community helpers. Texts: Informational texts and biographies about helpers. February: Community Helpers Focus: Informational Text Standards: K.FL.PA.2e: Add or substitute individual sounds to make new words. K.RI.KID.2: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. K.RI.CS.6: Identify the author and illustrator of a text and define their roles. K.SL.PKI.6: Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.				March: Animals and Habitats Focus: Science Integration Phonics: Continuing long vowels and diphthongs. Vocabulary: Habitat-related terms (jungle, desert, forest). Comprehension: Classifying animals based on habitat. Writing: Writing a sentence and drawing about a favorite animal. Texts: Nonfiction books and stories about animals. March: Animals and Habitats Focus: Science Integration Standards: K.FL.WC.4c: Decode regularly spelled CVC words. K.RI.KID.3: Describe the relationship between illustrations and the text. K.W.RBPK.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question. K.RL.CS.7: Describe the relationship between illustrations and the story.				April: Plants and Gardening Focus: Science Integration Phonics: Reviewing consonant blends and digraphs. Vocabulary: Plant-related words (seed, sprout, soil). Comprehension: Identifying the main topic and details. Writing: Labeling parts of a plant and writing about gardening. Texts: Informational texts about plants and growth. April: Plants and Gardening Focus: Science Integration Standards: K.FL.PA.2b: Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. K.RI.IKI.8: Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text. K.W.TTP.1: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces. K.SL.CC.2: Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally by asking and answering questions.				May-June: End-of-Year Review and Celebrations Focus: Cumulative Skills Phonics: Review of all learned phonics patterns. Vocabulary: Reflecting on the year's topics. Comprehension: Retelling favorite stories and recalling facts. Writing: Creating a memory book about the school year. Texts: Revisiting favorite read-alouds and informational texts. May: End-of-Year Review and Celebrations Focus: Cumulative Skills Standards: K.FL.F.5: Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding. K.W.PDW.6: With guidance, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing. K.RL.KID.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. K.SL.PKI.5: Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as appropriate.				

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 6 - Kindergarten Research SMART Block: Structured English Immersion and Math SMART Block

		August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May				June
		3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-8		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	1-2
Instructional Days		5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
Kindergarten	Research SMART Block: Structured English Immersion	August: Building a Foundation Unit Theme: "Welcome to School" Language Focus: Basic classroom vocabulary, routines, and social communication. Content Objectives: Recognize and use greetings, classroom objects, and basic commands. Identify roles and routines in a school setting. Tennessee Standards: RI.K.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. SL.K.1: Participate in collaborative conversations about kindergarten topics. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 1: Construct meaning from oral and visual presentations. ELP 2: Participate in conversations, discussions, and written exchanges.					Unit Theme: "All About Me and My World" Language Focus: Names, family members, body parts, and descriptive words. Content Objectives: Describe oneself and family using simple sentences. Identify people and places in the community. Tennessee Standards: W.K.2: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative texts. SL. K.4: Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with details. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 3: Speak and write about grade-appropriate complex literary and informational texts. ELP 9: Create clear and coherent oral or written language.					October: Seasons and Weather Unit Theme: "Changes Around Us" Language Focus: Weather vocabulary, colors, and action verbs. Content Objectives: Identify types of weather and clothing for each season. Sequence weather events using time-related words. Tennessee Standards: RI.K.2: Identify the main topic and retell key details. SL.K.5: Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 7: Adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience. ELP 10: Make accurate use of standard English.				November: Animals and Habitats Unit Theme: "Living Things" Language Focus: Animal names, habitats, and needs. Content Objectives: Identify animals and their habitats through oral and written activities. Compare and contrast living and non-living things. Tennessee Standards: W.K.8: Gather information from provided sources to answer a question. SL.K.6: Speak audibly and express thoughts clearly. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 5: Conduct research and evaluate information presented orally or in writing.				December: Celebrations and Traditions Unit Theme: "Holidays Around the World" Language Focus: Traditions, holidays, and cultural practices. Content Objectives: Identify and describe common holiday traditions. Use comparative language to discuss similarities and differences. Tennessee Standards: RI.K.6: Identify the author and illustrator of a text. SL.K.3: Ask and answer questions to seek help or clarify. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 4: Use context clues and prior knowledge for comprehension.				January: Exploration and Discovery Unit Theme: "Past and Present" Language Focus: Historical events, transportation, and time-related terms. Content Objectives: Identify key historical figures or inventions. Retell a story about an event in sequence. Tennessee Standards: RI.K.3: Describe the connection between two pieces of information in a text. SL.K.2: Confirm understanding by asking and answering questions. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 6: Analyze and critique ideas presented in various forms.				February: Community Helpers Unit Theme: "Helping Hands" Language Focus: Occupations, tools, and problem-solving vocabulary. Content Objectives: Describe the role of community helpers. Use verbs to explain what helpers do. Tennessee Standards: W.K.1: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces. SL.K.1: Participate in conversations about kindergarten topics. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 8: Clarify ideas with relevant examples and evidence.				March: Plants and Growth Unit Theme: "How Things Grow" Language Focus: Plant parts, life cycles, and action words. Content Objectives: Sequence the stages of plant growth. Describe what plants need to grow. Tennessee Standards: RI.K.4: Ask and answer questions about unknown words. SL.K.5: Add visual displays to support ideas. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 2: Engage in discussions and written exchanges on the topic.				April: Shapes and Patterns Unit Theme: "Discovering Patterns" Language Focus: Shapes, numbers, and spatial vocabulary. Content Objectives: Identify and describe shapes in the environment. Create and extend patterns using visuals and objects. Tennessee Standards: K.G.A.2: Correctly name shapes regardless of orientation or size. SL.K.1: Participate in collaborative conversations. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 7: Express ideas and information with precision.				May-June: Celebrating Achievements Unit Theme: "Looking Back, Moving Forward" Language Focus: Reflection, future plans, and gratitude. Content Objectives: Share achievements and favorite memories of the year. Express aspirations for the future using "I want to..." or "I will..." Tennessee Standards: W.K.8: Recall and represent information from experiences. SL.K.4: Express ideas with clear details. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 10: Use English to communicate information clearly.				
	Math SMART Block	Unit 1: Counting and Cardinality Duration: August – Early September Focus Standards: K.CC.A.1: Count to 100 by ones and tens. K.CC.B.4: Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities. K.CC.B.5: Count to answer "how many?" questions. Key Topics: Counting sequences. Writing numbers 0–10. Counting objects and comparing quantities. Assessment: Counting to 20, number writing practice, object counting.				Unit 2: Comparing Numbers Duration: Mid-September – Early October Focus Standards: K.CC.C.6: Compare numbers using terms like greater than, less than, or equal to. K.CC.C.7: Compare two numbers between 1 and 10. Key Topics: Comparing groups of objects. Using number lines for comparison. Introduction to greater than, less than symbols. Assessment: Comparing sets and numbers.				Unit 3: Numbers to 10 Duration: October – Early November Focus Standards: K.NBT.A.1: Compose and decompose numbers from 1–10. Key Topics: Building numbers using objects. Decomposing numbers into smaller parts. Writing number equations. Assessment: Decomposing numbers and fluency practice.				Unit 4: Geometry – Shapes and Attributes Duration: Mid-November – December Focus Standards: K.G.A.1: Describe positions of objects (above, below, beside, etc.). K.G.B.3: Identify shapes as 2D (flat) or 3D (solid). Key Topics: Identifying and describing shapes (circle, triangle, square, etc.). Composing and decomposing simple shapes. Comparing 2D and 3D shapes. Assessment: Shape recognition and attribute activities.				Unit 5: Numbers to 20 Duration: January Focus Standards: K.NBT.A.1: Understand teen numbers as composed of 10 and some ones. Key Topics: Counting and writing numbers 11–20. Place value with teen numbers. Introduction to tens and ones. Assessment: Place value activities and counting accuracy.				Unit 6: Measurement and Data Duration: February Focus Standards: K.MD.A.1: Describe measurable attributes (length, weight, height). K.MD.B.3: Classify objects into categories. Key Topics: Comparing objects by size, weight, and length. Sorting and classifying objects. Introduction to basic graphing concepts. Assessment: Measurement and sorting activities.				Unit 7: Addition and Subtraction to 10 Duration: March – Early April Focus Standards: K.OA.A.1: Represent addition and subtraction with objects and drawings. K.OA.A.2: Solve addition and subtraction problems within 10. Key Topics: Addition as "putting together." Subtraction as "taking away." Using number bonds and equations. Assessment: Addition and subtraction fluency.				Unit 8: Numbers to 100 Duration: Mid-April – May Focus Standards: K.CC.A.1: Count to 100 by ones and tens. K.NBT.A.1: Work with numbers beyond 20 using patterns. Key Topics: Counting by tens and ones to 100. Using a 100 chart. Review of patterns in numbers. Assessment: Counting to 100 and number patterns. Culminating Activities and Review Duration: Late May Activities: Math games to reinforce key concepts. Hands-on centers for addition, subtraction, and counting. Review assessments and skills mastery. Assessment: End-of-year diagnostic and performance tasks.				

Figure 7 - Kindergarten SMART Science Block, SMART Social Studies Block, and Arts SMART Block: Physical Education

		August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May				June
		3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-8		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	1-2
Instructional Days		5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
	Science & Technology SMART Block	August: Introduction to Science and Technology Science Unit: What is a Scientist? Focus Standards: K.ETS1.1: Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation people want to change. Key Topics: What do scientists do? Tools scientists use (e.g., magnifying glass, thermometer). Introduction to asking questions and making observations. Activities: "Scientist Dress-Up" day. Observation walks around the classroom/school. Technology Unit: Getting Started with Computers Focus Standards: K.CS.D.1: Recognize and operate simple digital devices. Key Topics: Parts of a computer (monitor, keyboard, mouse). Turning devices on and off. Activities: Identifying and naming computer parts. Practice logging in and logging off.					September: Exploring Our Environment Science Unit: Living and Non-Living Things Focus Standards: K.LS1.1: Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to survive. Key Topics: Differences between living and non-living things. Basic needs of plants and animals. Activities: Sorting living and non-living objects. Planting seeds in a class garden. Technology Unit: Basic Mouse and Keyboard Skills Focus Standards: K.CS.D.2: Use appropriate mouse and keyboard techniques. Key Topics: Clicking, dragging, and using a keyboard. Activities: Interactive games to practice mouse skills. Typing basic letters and numbers.				October: Weather and Seasons Science Unit: Weather Patterns Focus Standards: K.ESS2.1: Use and share observations of local weather conditions to describe patterns over time. Key Topics: Types of weather. Seasonal changes. Activities: Creating a weather chart. Dressing paper dolls for different weather conditions. Technology Unit: Introduction to Digital Art Focus Standards: K.CS.T.1: Use digital tools to create original works or solve problems. Key Topics: Using drawing apps/tools. Basic shapes and colors in digital formats. Activities: Creating seasonal artwork using digital tools.				November: Force and Motion Science Unit: Pushes and Pulls Focus Standards: K.PS2.1: Plan and conduct an investigation to compare the effects of different strengths or directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object. Key Topics: Types of motion (rolling, sliding). Strength and direction of forces. Activities: Push and pull experiments with toy cars. Building a ramp and observing motion. Technology Unit: Exploring Educational Apps Focus Standards: K.DI.CC.1: Use technology to explore ideas and solve problems. Key Topics: Using apps to support learning (e.g., weather, shapes, numbers). Activities: Rotational use of learning apps on tablets/computers.				December: Energy All Around Us Science Unit: Light and Sound Focus Standards: K.PS4.1: Plan and conduct investigations to provide evidence that vibrating materials can make sound and sound can make materials vibrate. Key Topics: Sources of light and sound. How sound travels. Activities: Creating shadow puppets. Exploring vibrations with tuning forks and rubber bands. Technology Unit: Introduction to Coding Focus Standards: K.APA.1: Recognize that steps can be used to solve simple problems. Key Topics: Basics of sequencing. Simple "unplugged" coding activities. Activities: Coding with arrows (e.g., guiding a classmate through a maze).				January: Animals and Their Habitats Science Unit: Animals in Winter Focus Standards: K.LS1.1: Use observations to describe patterns of what animals need to survive. Key Topics: Adaptations for survival (hibernation, migration). Activities: Creating animal habitat dioramas. Sorting animals by habitat. Technology Unit: Digital Storytelling Focus Standards: K.CS.D.3: Use technology tools to express ideas and tell stories. Key Topics: Using apps to create simple stories. Activities: Making a digital story about winter animals.				February: Earth and Its Resources Science Unit: Caring for Our Earth Focus Standards: K.ESS3.1: Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment. Key Topics: Recycling and reducing waste. Importance of clean water and air. Activities: Building with recycled materials. Reading and discussing "The Lorax." Technology Unit: Internet Safety Basics Focus Standards: K.DI.CC.2: Practice safe and responsible use of technology. Key Topics: Staying safe online. Recognizing trusted adults. Activities: Role-playing safe online scenarios.				March: Growing and Changing Science Unit: Plant Life Cycles Focus Standards: K.LS1.2: Recognize that all plants and animals grow and change over time. Key Topics: Day and night cycle. Patterns of the moon and stars. Activities: Creating a moon phase calendar. Making constellations with star stickers. Technology Unit: Multimedia Projects Focus Standards: K.CS.D.4: Use multimedia tools to create presentations. Key Topics: Combining images, sounds, and text. Activities: Creating a "Night Sky" slideshow.				Science Unit: Sun, Moon, and Stars Focus Standards: K.ESS1.1: Use observations of the sun, moon, and stars to describe patterns that can be predicted. Key Topics: Stages of plant growth. Activities: Observing seeds sprouting. Charting plant growth in journals. Technology Unit: Coding with Robots Focus Standards: K.AP.C.1: Follow simple algorithms (steps). Key Topics: Using robots to follow step-by-step instructions. Activities: Programming simple routes for robots.				May-June: Reflection and Celebration Science Unit: Science Review and Celebration Focus Standards: Review of all key standards. Key Topics: Revisiting key concepts and projects from the year. Activities: Science fair to showcase student work. Nature scavenger hunt. Technology Unit: End-of-Year Technology Showcase Focus Standards: Review of key technology standards. Key Topics: Showcasing skills learned throughout the year. Activities: Student presentations using technology tools. Classroom "tech museum" event for parents.				
	Research SMART: Social Studies	Unit 1: Introduction to Social Studies Timeline: August - Early September Focus Topics: What is Social Studies? Classroom rules and routines Understanding maps and globes Identifying symbols and landmarks Key Standards: K.01: Demonstrate understanding of classroom routines and roles. K.05: Use maps and globes to explore geography. K.10: Identify state and national symbols. Gallopade Resources: "What is Social Studies?" activity. Map and Globe Exploration lesson.				Unit 2: My Community and Me Timeline: Mid-September - October Focus Topics: Families and neighborhoods Community helpers and their roles Celebrations and traditions Key Standards: K.07: Describe roles of family members and helpers. K.09: Understand how traditions shape culture. Gallopade Resources: "Community Helpers" booklets and role play. "Celebrations Around Us" worksheets.					Unit 3: Geography and the Environment Timeline: November - Mid-December Focus Topics: Understanding landforms and water bodies Seasons and weather patterns How people adapt to their environment Key Standards: K.06: Recognize landforms and features. K.08: Explain how weather affects daily life. Gallopade Resources: "Exploring Our World" interactive maps. "Weather and Me" charting activities.								Unit 4: Civics and Citizenship Timeline: January - February Focus Topics: Rules, laws, and authority figures Rights and responsibilities of citizens Symbols of the United States Key Standards: K.02: Identify authority figures and explain their roles. K.10: Discuss the significance of the U.S. flag and other symbols. Gallopade Resources: "Being a Good Citizen" role-playing activities. "Symbols of America" coloring sheets.					Unit 5: Economics for Kids Timeline: March - Early April Focus Topics: Needs vs. wants Goods and services Jobs and earning money Key Standards: K.03: Explain needs and wants. K.04: Differentiate between goods and services. Gallopade Resources: "Needs and Wants" sorting activity. "What Do People Do?" job exploration booklets.				Unit 6: History and Heroes Timeline: Mid-April - May Focus Topics: Understanding timelines Celebrating historical figures and events Recognizing the importance of national holidays Key Standards: K.11: Create a simple timeline. K.12: Identify key historical figures and their contributions. Gallopade Resources: "My Timeline" personal history project. "Heroes of History" story series.				
	Arts SMART Block: Physical Education	August: Introduction to Physical Education Unit: Learning Rules, Routines, and Safety Standards Addressed: K.1.1, K.5.1, K.5.3 Objectives: Understand the importance of classroom rules and safety during activities. Learn to follow directions in group settings. Practice personal and general space awareness. Activities: Name games with movement. "Freeze Dance" for stopping and starting on cues. Demonstrations of personal vs. general space.				September: Locomotor Movements Unit: Moving Our Bodies Standards Addressed: K.1.2, K.2.1 Objectives: Identify and demonstrate locomotor movements (e.g., walking, running, hopping, skipping). Move safely and efficiently in different pathways and directions. Activities: Obstacle course focusing on pathways. "Follow the Leader" with locomotor movements. Movement dice game.				October: Non-Locomotor Skills Unit: Staying in One Spot Standards Addressed: K.1.3, K.2.2 Objectives: Demonstrate non-locomotor skills such as bending, twisting, stretching, and balancing. Maintain balance while holding different poses. Activities: Yoga for kids. Beanbag balance challenges. "Simon Says" with non-locomotor actions.				November: Manipulative Skills (Throwing and Catching) Unit: Hands at Work Standards Addressed: K.1.4, K.2.3 Objectives: Demonstrate underhand throwing and catching with a partner. Understand hand-eye coordination basics. Activities: Tossing scarves or beanbags. Partner catch using soft balls. "Clean Your Backyard" throwing game.				December: Manipulative Skills (Kicking and Striking) Unit: Feet and Equipment Standards Addressed: K.1.5, K.2.4 Objectives: Explore kicking and striking with controlled force. Practice using feet to move objects to targets. Activities: Kickball basics with stationary targets. Balloon striking with hands or paddles. Soccer dribbling drills.				January: Rhythms and Dance Unit: Moving to the Beat Standards Addressed: K.3.1, K.3.2 Objectives: Respond to music with rhythmic movement patterns. Perform basic dance routines. Activities: Line dances (e.g., "Cha-Cha Slide"). Rhythmic clapping and stepping games. Parachute movement activities with music.				February: Teamwork and Cooperation Unit: Working Together Standards Addressed: K.4.1, K.5.2 Objectives: Participate in group activities requiring cooperation. Share equipment and take turns during activities. Activities: Relay races with teamwork focus. Group parachute games. "Human Knot" for problem-solving.				March: Spatial Awareness and Movement Concepts Unit: Where Can I Move? Standards Addressed: K.1.6, K.2.5 Objectives: Recognize spatial concepts like over, under, around, and through. Navigate spaces safely with awareness of others. Activities: Obstacle course incorporating movement concepts. Cone weaving and hoop jumping. "Red Light, Green Light" with directional commands.				April: Fitness and Healthy Habits Unit: Being Active and Healthy Standards Addressed: K.3.3, K.6.1 Objectives: Identify physical activities that promote health. Recognize the importance of regular exercise. Activities: Fitness stations (jumping jacks, arm circles, etc.). Discussions on healthy food choices. Fun run or walk.				May-June: Review and Celebrate Unit: PE is Fun! Standards Addressed: K.1.1-K.6.1 (Comprehensive Review) Objectives: Demonstrate skills learned throughout the year. Celebrate progress and achievements in physical education. Activities: Field day with mixed skill activities. Skill showcase for parents. Favorite games from the year.				

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 8 - First Grade College and Career Exploration, Character Education, and Research SMART Block: English/Language Arts

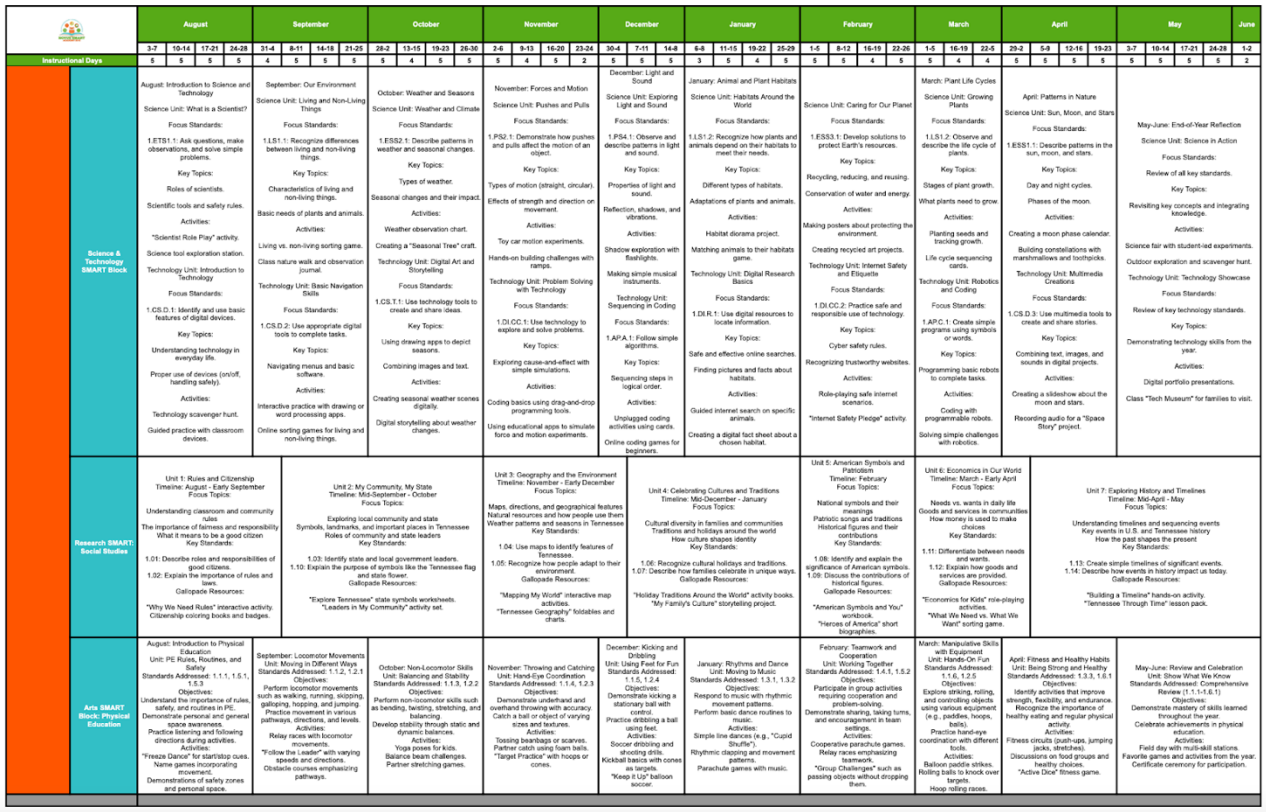
	August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May				June
	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-6		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	1-2
Instructional Days	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
College & Career Exploration	August: Setting Goals for the Future Unit Title: "What Can I Be?" Goals: Understand what it means to set goals. Recognize that working toward goals helps achieve dreams. Key Activities: Read If I Could Do Anything by Kevin Johnson. Create a "Future Me" self-portrait with a description of a dream job. Discuss short-term and long-term goals using examples (e.g., learning a new skill).				September: Jobs in Transportation Unit Title: "How We Move the World" Goals: Learn about careers in transportation, such as pilots, train conductors, and ship captains. Understand how transportation connects people and goods. Key Activities: Create models of different vehicles using craft supplies. Read Things That Go books and discuss who operates each vehicle. Play a "Career Match" game linking vehicles to professionals.				October: STEM Exploration Unit Title: "Solving Problems with Science" Goals: Dive deeper into STEM careers like computer programmers, engineers, and scientists. Foster curiosity and critical thinking. Key Activities: Build and test a simple ramp system for toy cars. Experiment with magnets and discuss how engineers use them. Explore coding concepts using age-appropriate apps or toys.				November: Careers in Hospitality and Service Unit Title: "Serving with a Smile" Goals: Learn about roles in restaurants, hotels, and other service-related careers. Understand the importance of teamwork and customer service. Key Activities: Set up a pretend restaurant or hotel in the classroom. Practice greeting and helping "customers." Design a menu or plan for a pretend event.				December: The World of Entrepreneurs Unit Title: "Starting Something New" Goals: Introduce the concept of entrepreneurship. Understand how people create businesses to solve problems or meet needs. Key Activities: Read Lemonade in Winter by Emily Jenkins. Work as a class to create and "sell" a product (e.g., bookmarks, art pieces). Discuss what makes a good business idea.				January: Careers in Exploration Unit Title: "Discovering New Worlds" Goals: Learn about explorers in land, sea, air, and space. Encourage curiosity about the unknown. Key Activities: Explore maps and discuss careers like archaeologist, cartographer, and astronaut. Create a "Treasure Map" for an imaginary exploration mission. Discuss famous explorers (e.g., Amelia Earhart, Jacques Cousteau).				February: Jobs in Communication Unit Title: "Telling Stories and Sharing News" Goals: Discover careers in writing, journalism, and broadcasting. Understand how communication connects people. Key Activities: Write and present a simple news story. Explore tools like microphones and cameras used by journalists. Create a class newsletter with student-written articles.				March: Careers in Health and Medicine Unit Title: "Helping People Stay Healthy" Goals: Explore medical professions, including doctors, nurses, and pharmacists. Learn about how these roles help people. Key Activities: Learn about human anatomy through simple diagrams or puzzles. Role-play as doctors and patients with a pretend medical kit. Visit or virtually tour a clinic or pharmacy.				April: Environmental Careers Unit Title: "Protecting Our Planet" Goals: Introduce roles like environmental scientists, park rangers, and conservationists. Encourage responsibility for caring for the Earth. Key Activities: Plant a classroom garden or care for a small plant. Learn about recycling and create a recycled art project. Explore animal habitats and how they're protected.				May-June: College Exploration and Career Showcase Unit Title: "Looking Ahead" Goals: Reflect on career exploration and the idea of college as a path to achieving goals. Celebrate student growth and dreams for the future. Key Activities: Host a "Career Day" where students share a project about their favorite job. Create a timeline showing steps to reach a dream career. Reflect on the year by writing or drawing about a favorite unit.			
Character Education	August: Starting Strong – Building a Positive Classroom Community Focus: Establishing routines, understanding emotions, and setting a positive tone. Skills: Self-awareness, group norms, and inclusion. Activities: Read-aloud: "Be You!" by Peter H. Reynolds. Create a class contract with student input. Introduce a "Mood Meter" for daily emotional check-ins. Partner activity: "Find a friend who..." (icebreaker focused on commonalities).				September: Recognizing and Managing Emotions Focus: Emotional identification and regulation. Skills: Emotional vocabulary, self-regulation, mindfulness. Activities: Storytime: "A Little Spot of Emotion" by Diane Alber. Emotion wheel: Identify and discuss different emotions. Practice mindfulness exercises (e.g., belly breathing, "Five Senses" grounding activity). Role-play: Practice calming strategies for moments of frustration or sadness.				October: Empathy and Understanding Others Focus: Seeing things from another's perspective and showing kindness. Skills: Empathy, active listening, compassion. Activities: Read-aloud: "Stand in My Shoes: Kids Learning About Empathy" by Bob Sornson. Partner activity: "Walk in Their Shoes" (students share a challenge or feeling). Kindness challenge: Keep track of kind acts in the classroom. Collaborative game: Solve scenarios where students need to help someone in need.				November: Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution Focus: Using strategies to resolve disagreements peacefully. Skills: Communication, compromise, collaborative thinking. Activities: Storytime: "Enemy Pie" by Derek Munson. Introduce a problem-solving process: Stop, Think, Plan, Act. Conflict role-play: Practice resolving common first-grade disagreements (e.g., sharing supplies). Group activity: Create a classroom "peace corner" with tools for conflict resolution.				December: Respect and Responsibility Focus: Taking ownership and treating others with dignity. Skills: Accountability, fairness, respect for differences. Activities: Read-aloud: "Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners" by Laurie Keller. Class discussion: What does respect look like at school, home, and in the community? Create "Responsibility Charts" for tasks like classroom jobs or personal goals. Role-play: Practice respectful disagreement using "I statements."				January: Teamwork and Cooperation Focus: Working effectively with others to achieve goals. Skills: Collaboration, turn-taking, leadership. Activities: Storytime: "Stone Soup" (various versions). Group project: Work together to build something (e.g., a paper chain, a simple craft). Play cooperative games like "Cross the River" or "Human Knot." Reflect: What makes a good teammate? Share ideas and examples.				February: Inclusivity and Celebrating Differences Focus: Understanding diversity and being inclusive. Skills: Perspective-taking, fairness, appreciation for differences. Activities: Read-aloud: "All Are Welcome" by Alexandra Penfold. Create an "Inclusion Tree" where students write ways to make others feel included on paper leaves. Class discussion: Celebrate how everyone is unique and why that makes the group special. Role-play: Practice ways to invite someone new into a game or group activity.				March: Perseverance and Growth Mindset Focus: Overcoming challenges and learning from mistakes. Skills: Resilience, self-confidence, positive self-talk. Activities: Storytime: "Giraffes Can't Dance" by Giles Andreae. Introduce the concept of "The Power of Yet" (e.g., "I can't do it... yet!"). Growth mindset activity: Write or draw something they worked hard to learn. Reflect: Share examples of famous people who persevered (e.g., inventors, athletes).				April: Being a Good Leader Focus: Taking initiative and setting a positive example. Skills: Leadership, decision-making, role modeling. Activities: Read-aloud: "Grace for President" by Kelly DiPucchio. Discuss: What makes a good leader? Brainstorm examples from their lives. Leadership challenge: Students take turns being "line leader" and solving a small classroom challenge. Group project: Work together to improve part of the school or classroom.				May-June: Gratitude, Reflection, and Moving Forward Focus: Celebrating growth and appreciating others. Skills: Gratitude, reflection, celebration. Activities: Storytime: "Last Stop on Market Street" by Matt de la Peña. Gratitude circle: Share one thing they are thankful for about the school year. Memory book: Draw or write about favorite moments and what they learned. Class celebration: Create a mural of their collective achievements and strengths.			
Research SMART Block: English/Language Arts	August: Launching Literacy & Foundational Skills Focus: Building Classroom Community and Foundational Skills Standards: 1.FL.PC.1: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print. 1.FL.PA.2: Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes). 1.RL.KID.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 1.W.TTP.3: Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event. Key Activities: Phonics: Review letter-sound correspondences and blending CVC words. Vocabulary: Introduce words related to school routines and classroom community. Texts: Read-alouds about starting school and making friends (e.g., "Chrysanthemum"). Writing: Practice forming letters and writing simple sentences about self and school.				September: Fables and Stories Focus: Narrative Elements and Morals Standards: 1.RL.KID.2: Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message. 1.RL.CS.4: Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. 1.FL.PA.2a: Add or subtract individual sounds in simple, one-syllable words to make new words. 1.W.TTP.3: Write narratives with two or more sequenced events. Key Activities: Phonics: Blending sounds to read and spell words with consonant blends. Vocabulary: Introduce new words from fables and stories. Texts: Aesop's fables like "The Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Lion and the Mouse." Writing: Retell a fable using drawings and sentences.				October: The Human Body Focus: Informational Texts and Science Integration Standards: 1.RI.KID.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. 1.RI.CS.6: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. 1.FL.F.5: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding. 1.W.TTP.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to provide information on a topic. Key Activities: Phonics: Work with long vowel sounds and silent e. Vocabulary: Words related to body parts and systems (e.g., heart, lungs, muscles). Texts: Informational texts about the human body. Writing: Write a short report about a body part and its function.				November: Early American Civilizations Focus: Social Studies Integration Standards: 1.RI.KID.3: Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. 1.RI.CS.4: Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. 1.W.RBPK.7: Participate in shared research and writing projects. 1.SL.CC.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults. Key Activities: Phonics: Introduce r-controlled vowels (ar, or, er). Vocabulary: Words related to early civilizations (e.g., pyramid, maize). Texts: Informational texts about the Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations. Writing: Write a paragraph about a cultural tradition.				December: Stories of the Seasons Focus: Exploring Fiction and Poetry Standards: 1.RL.CS.5: Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information. 1.RL.KI.9: Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories. 1.FL.WC.4: Read high-frequency words by sight. 1.W.TTP.3: Write narratives with details about characters and events. Key Activities: Phonics: Review consonant digraphs (sh, ch, th, wh). Vocabulary: Words related to seasonal changes and holidays. Texts: Fictional stories and poems about winter and holidays. Writing: Write a story about a favorite holiday tradition.				January: Animals and Their Habitats Focus: Science Integration and Informational Texts Standards: 1.RI.KID.2: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. 1.RI.KI.7: Use illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas. 1.W.RBPK.8: Recall information from experiences or gather information to answer a question. 1.SL.PKI.5: Add drawings or visuals to descriptions when appropriate. Key Activities: Phonics: Work with vowel teams (ai, ay, ea). Vocabulary: Habitat-related terms (e.g., tundra, savanna, predator). Texts: Nonfiction books about animals and their habitats. Writing: Create an informational booklet about an animal and its habitat.				February: Famous Americans and Black History Focus: Biographies and Social Studies Integration Standards: 1.RI.CS.6: Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text. 1.RI.KI.8: Identify the reasons an author gives to support ideas. 1.W.TTP.2: Write informative texts with facts about a topic. 1.SL.CC.2: Ask and answer questions about information presented orally. Key Activities: Phonics: Work with long vowels and diphthongs (oi, oy). Vocabulary: Words related to historical figures and achievements. Texts: Biographies of Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and other notable Americans. Writing: Write about a famous American and their contributions.				March: Fairy Tales and Folktales Focus: Exploring Fictional Genres Standards: 1.RL.CS.5: Identify the structure of a story, including the beginning, middle, and end. 1.RL.CS.4: Use illustrations and words to describe characters, settings, or events. 1.W.TTP.3: Write narratives with a clear sequence of events. 1.FL.F.5: Read grade-level text fluently and accurately. Key Activities: Phonics: Review suffixes (-ed, -ing). Vocabulary: Words related to fairy tales and magical elements (e.g., castle, enchanted). Texts: "Cinderella," "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," and other classic tales. Writing: Write a fairy tale with illustrations.				April: Plants and Life Cycles Focus: Informational Texts and Science Integration Standards: 1.RI.KID.2: Retell the main topic and details of a text. 1.RI.CS.7: Use illustrations to explain ideas. 1.W.TTP.2: Write informative pieces explaining a topic. 1.SL.PKI.6: Speak clearly and audibly in discussions. Key Activities: Phonics: Review compound words and two-syllable words. Vocabulary: Plant-related terms (e.g., seed, sprout, photosynthesis). Texts: Informational texts about plants and their growth. Writing: Create a plant journal documenting growth stages.				May-June: End-of-Year Review and Celebrations Focus: Reflecting on Learning Standards: 1.RL.KID.1: Retell stories, focusing on key details. 1.W.PDW.6: With guidance, explore a variety of digital tools to publish writing. 1.SL.PKI.5: Add drawings or visuals to presentations. 1.FL.F.5: Read and comprehend grade-level texts. Key Activities: Phonics: Review all learned phonics patterns. Vocabulary: Reflect on key topics and concepts from the year. Texts: Revisiting favorite stories and informational texts. Writing: Create a memory book highlighting the year's learning.			

Figure 9 - First Grade Research SMART Block: Structured English Immersion and Math SMART Block

	August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May				June
	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-8		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		25-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	1-2
Instructional Days	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	2
Grade 1																																									
Research SMART Block: Structured English Immersion	August: Building a Community Unit Theme: "Getting to Know Each Other" Language Focus: Classroom routines, basic conversation skills, and community-building vocabulary. Content Objectives: Identify and practice classroom routines. Use greetings, introductions, and express needs. Tennessee Standards: SL.1.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts. W.1.8: Recall information from experiences to answer a question. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 1: Construct meaning from oral and visual presentations. ELP 2: Participate in conversations, discussions, and written exchanges.				September: Our World Unit Theme: "Exploring Families and Communities" Language Focus: Vocabulary related to family members, community roles, and descriptive words. Content Objectives: Describe family members and their roles using simple sentences. Identify places in the community and explain their purpose. Tennessee Standards: RI.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. W.1.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to convey information clearly. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 4: Use context clues and prior knowledge to understand meaning. ELP 7: Adapt language to different tasks and audiences.				October: Weather and Seasons Unit Theme: "The World Around Us" Language Focus: Weather terms, seasons, and time-related language. Content Objectives: Identify and describe weather conditions and seasonal changes. Discuss how weather affects daily life. Tennessee Standards: RI.1.2: Identify the main topic and retell key details. SL.1.4: Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 3: Speak and write about grade-appropriate topics and texts. ELP 5: Conduct research and evaluate information presented in different formats.				November: Animals and Habitats Unit Theme: "Living Things in Nature" Language Focus: Animal names, habitats, needs, and action verbs. Content Objectives: Identify animals and their characteristics. Describe animal habitats and explain how animals meet their needs. Tennessee Standards: W.1.7: Participate in shared research and writing projects. SL.1.6: Produce complete sentences to provide requested details or clarification. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 6: Analyze and critique ideas presented in texts or discussions. ELP 9: Create clear and coherent oral or written narratives.				December: Celebrations Around the World Unit Theme: "Cultures and Traditions" Language Focus: Holiday names, customs, and comparative language. Content Objectives: Identify different cultural traditions and holidays. Compare and contrast how holidays are celebrated globally. Tennessee Standards: RI.1.6: Distinguish between information provided by pictures versus text. W.1.1: Write opinion pieces with a clear topic and reason. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 8: Clarify ideas with relevant examples and evidence. ELP 10: Use English to communicate for various purposes.				January: Exploration and Innovation Unit Theme: "Changes Over Time" Language Focus: Vocabulary about transportation, inventions, and historical changes. Content Objectives: Sequence events related to historical innovations. Use time-related words to discuss changes over time. Tennessee Standards: RI.1.3: Describe the connection between two pieces of information. SL.1.2: Ask and answer questions about details in a presentation. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 5: Interpret information presented in diverse formats. ELP 7: Express ideas and information precisely.				February: Helping Hands Unit Theme: "Community Helpers" Language Focus: Occupation names, tools, and problem-solving language. Content Objectives: Describe the role of various community helpers. Explain how helpers solve problems in the community. Tennessee Standards: W.1.3: Write narratives about real or imagined experiences. SL.1.5: Add drawings or visuals to clarify descriptions. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 2: Participate in discussions on various topics. ELP 9: Use precise language for speaking and writing tasks.				March: Plants and Growth Unit Theme: "Nature's Growth and Cycles" Language Focus: Plant parts, life cycles, and sequence words. Content Objectives: Identify and describe the stages of plant growth. Discuss what plants need to grow. Tennessee Standards: RI.1.4: Ask and answer questions to clarify unknown words. W.1.5: Focus on a topic and strengthen writing through feedback. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 7: Adapt language choices for different contexts. ELP 10: Communicate ideas clearly and effectively.				April: Patterns and Problem Solving Unit Theme: "Math in the Real World" Language Focus: Shapes, patterns, and mathematical reasoning vocabulary. Content Objectives: Identify and describe shapes and patterns in the environment. Solve simple problems using patterns and objects. Tennessee Standards: W.1.8: Recall information from provided sources to answer questions. SL.1.1: Engage in discussions about grade 1 topics. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 4: Demonstrate understanding through speaking and writing. ELP 10: Use appropriate language for academic tasks.				May: Reflections and Goals Unit Theme: "Looking Back, Moving Forward" Language Focus: Reflection, aspirations, and summary language. Content Objectives: Share achievements and favorite learning moments. Express hopes and goals for the future using "I want to..." or "I hope to...". Tennessee Standards: W.1.6: Use digital tools to produce and publish writing. SL.1.4: Express ideas with clear and relevant details. ELPA21 Standards: ELP 10: Use English to communicate for various academic and social purposes.			
Math SMART Block	Unit 1: Addition and Subtraction within 10 Duration: August – Early September Focus Standards: 1.OA.A.1: Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems. 1.OA.C.6: Add and subtract within 10 fluently. Key Topics: Understanding addition as "putting together" and subtraction as "taking apart." Using visual models (number lines, ten frames) to solve problems. Strategies for fluency within 10 (counting on, doubles, making ten). Assessment: Addition and subtraction fluency within 10.				Unit 2: Place Value and Numbers to 120 Duration: Mid-September – October Focus Standards: 1.NBT.A.1: Count to 120, starting at any number. 1.NBT.B.2: Understand the two digits of a two-digit number represent tens and ones. Key Topics: Counting forward and backward to 120. Representing numbers with tens and ones. Comparing numbers using <, >, and = symbols. Assessment: Place value and counting activities.				Unit 3: Addition and Subtraction within 20 Duration: November Focus Standards: 1.OA.B.3: Apply properties of operations to addition and subtraction. 1.OA.C.6: Add and subtract within 20 using strategies. Key Topics: Making 10 to add and subtract. Using number bonds and fact families. Solving word problems with addition and subtraction. Assessment: Fluency within 20 and problem-solving tasks.				Unit 4: Geometry – Shapes and Their Attributes Duration: December Focus Standards: 1.G.A.1: Distinguish between defining and non-defining attributes of shapes. 1.G.A.2: Compose two-dimensional shapes or three-dimensional shapes. Key Topics: Identifying and describing 2D and 3D shapes. Composing new shapes by combining existing ones. Sorting shapes based on attributes. Assessment: Shape composition and attribute activities.				Unit 5: Numbers to 120 and Place Value Concepts Duration: January Focus Standards: 1.NBT.C.4: Add within 100 using models and place value strategies. 1.NBT.C.5: Mentally find 10 more or 10 less without counting. Key Topics: Adding multiples of 10 to numbers. Using place value strategies to solve addition problems. Counting and representing numbers on a number line. Assessment: Adding within 100 and mental math tasks.				Unit 6: Measurement and Time Duration: February Focus Standards: 1.MD.A.1: Order three objects by length; compare lengths. 1.MD.B.3: Tell and write time in hours and half-hours. Key Topics: Measuring length using standard and non-standard units. Comparing lengths of objects. Reading analog and digital clocks. Assessment: Measurement and time-telling activities.				Unit 7: Data and Graphing Duration: March Focus Standards: 1.MD.C.4: Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories. Key Topics: Collecting data and creating bar graphs, tally charts, and picture graphs. Interpreting data to answer questions. Comparing data using "more than" and "less than." Assessment: Graph creation and interpretation tasks.				Unit 8: Addition and Subtraction within 100 Duration: April Focus Standards: 1.NBT.C.4: Add within 100 using models, place value, and properties of operations. 1.OA.A.2: Solve word problems involving three whole numbers. Key Topics: Adding and subtracting within 100 using regrouping. Solving multi-step addition and subtraction word problems. Using number lines and base-ten blocks for problem-solving. Assessment: Adding and subtracting with regrouping.				Unit 9: Foundations for Multiplication and Fractions Duration: May Focus Standards: 1.OA.D.7: Understand the meaning of the equal sign. 1.G.A.3: Partition circles and rectangles into two and four equal shares. Key Topics: Understanding equal groups as a foundation for multiplication. Partitioning shapes into halves and quarters. Exploring repeated addition. Assessment: Partitioning and equal group activities. Culminating Activities and Review Duration: Late May Activities: Math centers focusing on games and real-world problem-solving. Review of key concepts across all units. Diagnostic assessments for readiness for second grade. Assessment: End-of-year performance tasks and diagnostic review.			

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 10 - First Grade SMART Science Block, SMART Social Studies Block, and Arts SMART Block: Physical Education



	August				September				October				November				December				January				February				March				April				May					June
	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28	31-4	8-11	14-18	21-25	28-2	13-15	19-23	26-30	2-6	9-13	16-20	23-24	30-4	7-11	14-8		6-8	11-15	19-22	25-29	1-5	8-12	16-19	22-26	1-5	16-19	22-5		29-2	5-9	12-16	19-23	3-7	10-14	17-21	24-28		1-2
Instructional Days	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5		3	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5		2
Science & Technology SMART Block	August: Introduction to Science and Technology Science Unit: What is a Scientist? Focus Standards: 1.ETS1.1: Ask questions, make observations, and solve simple problems. Key Topics: Roles of scientists. Scientific tools and safety rules. Activities: "Scientist Role Play" activity. Science tool exploration station. Technology Unit: Introduction to Technology Focus Standards: 1.CS.D.1: Identify and use basic features of digital devices. Key Topics: Understanding technology in everyday life. Proper use of devices (on/off, handling safely). Activities: Technology scavenger hunt. Guided practice with classroom devices.				September: Our Environment Science Unit: Living and Non-Living Things Focus Standards: 1.LS1.1: Recognize differences between living and non-living things. Key Topics: Characteristics of living and non-living things. Basic needs of plants and animals. Activities: Living vs. non-living sorting game. Class nature walk and observation journal. Technology Unit: Basic Navigation Skills Focus Standards: 1.CS.D.2: Use appropriate digital tools to complete tasks. Key Topics: Navigating menus and basic software. Activities: Interactive practice with drawing or word processing apps. Online sorting games for living and non-living things.				October: Weather and Seasons Science Unit: Weather and Climate Focus Standards: 1.ESS2.1: Describe patterns in weather and seasonal changes. Key Topics: Types of weather. Seasonal changes and their impact. Activities: Weather observation chart. Creating a "Seasonal Tree" craft. Technology Unit: Digital Art and Storytelling Focus Standards: 1.CS.T.1: Use technology tools to create and share ideas. Key Topics: Using drawing apps to depict seasons. Combining images and text. Activities: Creating seasonal weather scenes digitally. Digital storytelling about weather changes.				November: Forces and Motion Science Unit: Pushes and Pulls Focus Standards: 1.PS2.1: Demonstrate how pushes and pulls affect the motion of an object. Key Topics: Types of motion (straight, circular). Effects of strength and direction on movement. Activities: Toy car motion experiments. Hands-on building challenges with ramps. Technology Unit: Problem Solving with Technology Focus Standards: 1.DI.CC.1: Use technology to explore and solve problems. Key Topics: Exploring cause-and-effect with simple simulations. Activities: Coding basics using drag-and-drop programming tools. Using educational apps to simulate force and motion experiments.				December: Light and Sound Science Unit: Exploring Light and Sound Focus Standards: 1.PS4.1: Observe and describe patterns in light and sound. Key Topics: Properties of light and sound. Reflection, shadows, and vibrations. Activities: Shadow exploration with flashlights. Making simple musical instruments. Technology Unit: Sequencing in Coding Focus Standards: 1.AP.A.1: Follow simple algorithms. Key Topics: Sequencing steps in logical order. Activities: Unplugged coding activities using cards. Online coding games for beginners.				January: Animal and Plant Habitats Science Unit: Habitats Around the World Focus Standards: 1.LS1.2: Recognize how plants and animals depend on their habitats to meet their needs. Key Topics: Different types of habitats. Adaptations of plants and animals. Activities: Habitat diorama project. Matching animals to their habitats game. Technology Unit: Digital Research Basics Focus Standards: 1.DI.R.1: Use digital resources to locate information. Key Topics: Safe and effective online searches. Finding pictures and facts about habitats. Activities: Guided internet search on specific animals. Creating a digital fact sheet about a chosen habitat.				February: Caring for Our Planet Focus Standards: 1.ESS3.1: Develop solutions to protect Earth's resources. Key Topics: Recycling, reducing, and reusing. Conservation of water and energy. Activities: Making posters about protecting the environment. Creating recycled art projects. Technology Unit: Internet Safety and Etiquette Focus Standards: 1.DI.CC.2: Practice safe and responsible use of technology. Key Topics: Cyber safety rules. Recognizing trustworthy websites. Activities: Role-playing safe internet scenarios. "Internet Safety Pledge" activity.				March: Plant Life Cycles Science Unit: Growing Plants Focus Standards: 1.LS1.2: Observe and describe the life cycle of plants. Key Topics: Stages of plant growth. What plants need to grow. Activities: Planting seeds and tracking growth. Life cycle sequencing cards. Technology Unit: Robotics and Coding Focus Standards: 1.AP.C.1: Create simple programs using symbols or words. Key Topics: Programming basic robots to complete tasks. Activities: Coding with programmable robots. Solving simple challenges with robotics.				April: Patterns in Nature Science Unit: Sun, Moon, and Stars Focus Standards: 1.ESS1.1: Describe patterns in the sun, moon, and stars. Key Topics: Day and night cycles. Phases of the moon. Activities: Creating a moon phase calendar. Building constellations with marshmallows and toothpicks. Technology Unit: Multimedia Creations Focus Standards: 1.CS.D.3: Use multimedia tools to create and share stories. Key Topics: Combining text, images, and sounds in digital projects. Activities: Creating a slideshow about the moon and stars. Recording audio for a "Space Story" project.				May: End-of-Year Reflection Science Unit: Science in Action Focus Standards: Review of all key standards. Key Topics: Revisiting key concepts and integrating knowledge. Activities: Science fair with student-led experiments. Outdoor exploration and scavenger hunt. Technology Unit: Technology Showcase Focus Standards: Review of key technology standards. Key Topics: Demonstrating technology skills from the year. Activities: Digital portfolio presentations. Class "Tech Museum" for families to visit.				
Research SMART: Social Studies	Unit 1: Rules and Citizenship Timeline: August - Early September Focus Topics: Understanding classroom and community rules The importance of fairness and responsibility What it means to be a good citizen Key Standards: 1.01: Describe roles and responsibilities of good citizens. 1.02: Explain the importance of rules and laws. Gallopade Resources: "Why We Need Rules" interactive activity. Citizenship coloring books and badges.				Unit 2: My Community, My State Timeline: Mid-September - October Focus Topics: Exploring local community and state Symbols, landmarks, and important places in Tennessee Roles of community and state leaders Key Standards: 1.03: Identify state and local government leaders. 1.10: Explain the purpose of symbols like the Tennessee flag and state flower. Gallopade Resources: "Explore Tennessee" state symbols worksheets. "Leaders in My Community" activity set.				Unit 3: Geography and the Environment Timeline: November - Early December Focus Topics: Maps, directions, and geographical features Natural resources and how people use them Weather patterns and seasons in Tennessee Key Standards: 1.04: Use maps to identify features of Tennessee. 1.05: Recognize how people adapt to their environment. Gallopade Resources: "Mapping My World" interactive map activities. "Tennessee Geography" foldables and charts.				Unit 4: Celebrating Cultures and Traditions Timeline: Mid-December - January Focus Topics: Cultural diversity in families and communities Traditions and holidays around the world How culture shapes identity Key Standards: 1.06: Recognize cultural holidays and traditions. 1.07: Describe how families celebrate in unique ways. Gallopade Resources: "Holiday Traditions Around the World" activity books. "My Family's Culture" storytelling project.				Unit 5: American Symbols and Patriotism Timeline: February Focus Topics: National symbols and their meanings Patriotic songs and traditions Historical figures and their contributions Key Standards: 1.08: Identify and explain the significance of American symbols. 1.09: Discuss the contributions of historical figures. Gallopade Resources: "American Symbols and You" workbook. "Heroes of America" short biographies.				Unit 6: Economics in Our World Timeline: March - Early April Focus Topics: Needs vs. wants in daily life Goods and services in communities How money is used to make choices Key Standards: 1.11: Differentiate between needs and wants. 1.12: Explain how goods and services are provided. Gallopade Resources: "Economics for Kids" role-playing activities. "What We Need vs. What We Want" sorting game.				Unit 7: Exploring History and Timelines Timeline: Mid-April - May Focus Topics: Understanding timelines and sequencing events Key events in U.S. and Tennessee history How the past shapes the present Key Standards: 1.13: Create simple timelines of significant events. 1.14: Describe how events in history impact us today. Gallopade Resources: "Building a Timeline" hands-on activity. "Tennessee Through Time" lesson pack.				
Arts SMART Block: Physical Education	August: Introduction to Physical Education Unit: PE Rules, Routines, and Safety Standards Addressed: 1.1.1, 1.5.1, 1.5.3 Objectives: Understand the importance of rules, safety, and routines in PE. Demonstrate personal and general space awareness. Practice listening and following directions during activities. Activities: "Freeze Dance" for start/stop cues. Name games incorporating movement. Demonstrations of safety zones and personal space.				September: Locomotor Movements Unit: Moving in Different Ways Standards Addressed: 1.1.2, 1.2.1 Objectives: Perform locomotor movements such as walking, running, skipping, galloping, hopping, and jumping. Practice movement in various pathways, directions, and levels. Activities: Relay races with locomotor movements. "Follow the Leader" with varying speeds and directions. Obstacle courses emphasizing pathways.				October: Non-Locomotor Skills Unit: Balancing and Stability Standards Addressed: 1.1.3, 1.2.2 Objectives: Perform non-locomotor skills such as bending, twisting, stretching, and balancing. Develop stability through static and dynamic balances. Activities: Yoga poses for kids. Balance beam challenges. Partner stretching games.				November: Throwing and Catching Unit: Hand-Eye Coordination Standards Addressed: 1.1.4, 1.2.3 Objectives: Demonstrate underhand and overhand throwing with accuracy. Catch a ball or object of varying sizes and textures. Activities: Tossing beanbags or scarves. Partner catch using foam balls. "Target Practice" with hoops or cones.				December: Kicking and Dribbling Unit: Using Feet for Fun Standards Addressed: 1.1.5, 1.2.4 Objectives: Demonstrate kicking a stationary ball with control. Practice dribbling a ball using feet. Activities: Soccer dribbling and shooting drills. Kickball basics with cones as targets. "Keep it Up" balloon soccer.				January: Rhythms and Dance Unit: Moving to Music Standards Addressed: 1.3.1, 1.3.2 Objectives: Respond to music with rhythmic movement patterns. Perform basic dance routines to music. Activities: Simple line dances (e.g., "Cupid Shuffle"). Rhythmic clapping and movement patterns. Parachute games with music.				February: Teamwork and Cooperation Unit: Working Together Standards Addressed: 1.4.1, 1.5.2 Objectives: Participate in group activities requiring cooperation and problem-solving. Demonstrate sharing, taking turns, and encouragement in team settings. Activities: Cooperative parachute games. Relay races emphasizing teamwork. "Group Challenges" such as passing objects without dropping them.				March: Manipulative Skills with Equipment Unit: Hands-On Fun Standards Addressed: 1.1.6, 1.2.5 Objectives: Explore striking, rolling, and controlling objects using various equipment (e.g., paddles, hoops, balls). Practice hand-eye coordination with different tools. Activities: Balloon paddle strikes. Rolling balls to knock over targets. Hoop rolling races.				April: Fitness and Healthy Habits Unit: Being Strong and Healthy Standards Addressed: 1.3.3, 1.6.1 Objectives: Identify activities that improve strength, flexibility, and endurance. Recognize the importance of healthy eating and regular physical activity. Activities: Fitness circuits (push-ups, jumping jacks, stretches). Discussions on food groups and healthy choices. "Active Dice" fitness game.				May-June: Review and Celebration Unit: Show What We Know Standards Addressed: Comprehensive Review (1.1.1-1.6.1) Objectives: Demonstrate mastery of skills learned throughout the year. Celebrate achievements in physical education. Activities: Field day with multi-skill stations. Favorite games and activities from the year. Certificate ceremony for participation.				

Section 1.2b: Describe the academic plan for the proposed school. Detail how the academic plan relates to the mission and goals of the proposed school.

Alignment with Mission and Goals. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s mission to produce global achievers through high-quality academic instruction and its vision of beginning college and career readiness in Kindergarten are deeply integrated into the academic plan. By prioritizing rigorous, standards-aligned curricula and differentiated instruction, the plan ensures that scholars are challenged to meet or exceed grade-level expectations. The two-educator classroom model and focus on instructional strategies like ABL, IBL, and PBL underscore the academy's commitment to providing an extraordinary learning experience.

Curricula Materials. The use of research-based curricula aligns with Tennessee Academic Standards ensures scholars receive a solid foundation for measurable academic success. Consulting EdReports for curricular selection demonstrates due diligence and a focus on adopting high-quality instructional materials. The strategic sequencing of curricula allows for spiraling content to reinforce learning and sustain proficiency throughout the school year, a critical element for achieving the school's ambitious academic goals.

Two Educators in the Classroom. Our two-educator classroom model facilitates personalized learning by incorporating direct instruction, small-group instruction, independent work, and blended learning. This approach aligns with the mission by creating tailored opportunities for scholars to excel academically and develop critical thinking skills. Grades K-2 will be self-contained; Grades 3-5 will be departmentalized with educator teams teaching English/Language Arts and Social Studies, or Math and Science; and Grades 6-8 will be fully departmentalized. This model reflects an intentional progression of high-quality instruction with academic rigor and specialization as scholars advance through the school.

Focus on Affirmation. Our focus on affirmation increases self-confidence and creates a learning environment where all scholars, regardless of their background or abilities, feel seen, valued, and supported. This is especially crucial for scholars identified as economically disadvantaged who may face additional barriers to engagement, and for scholars with disabilities and ELs who often require differentiated instruction to thrive. This approach ensures that all scholars can relate to the

material, fostering a sense of belonging and motivation to succeed. Additionally, the emphasis on creating a positive and affirming classroom environment directly supports the social and emotional needs of scholars. For scholars with disabilities, this might mean providing adaptive tools or individualized support to ensure participation. For ELs, it could include linguistic accommodations and bilingual resources to reduce language barriers and boost comprehension. Through this holistic approach, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure that every scholar, regardless of their challenges, receives the support needed to thrive both academically and socially, aligning with the mission to prepare them for lifelong success.

Connection to Goals and Priorities. Aligning to Tennessee Academic Standards ensures accountability and prepares scholars for state assessments, setting them on the path to college and career readiness. The focus on achieving "Met Expectations" or "Exceeded Expectations" ensures scholars are not only performing at grade level but also positioned for long-term success.

Section 1.2c: Detail key characteristics of the academic plan such as educational philosophy, instructional methods, and innovative teaching methods. Explain how the academic plan's characteristics support the school's mission, promote academic achievement, and align with Tennessee's academic standards.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) embraces an educational philosophy rooted in academic excellence and innovation. This approach aligns with our school's vision to produce global achievers by ensuring that high-quality academic instruction, infused with character development and ambition, begins in Kindergarten. By fostering a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum, we aim to prepare scholars to meet or exceed academic goals, instilling a relentless pursuit of success.

Two-Educator Classroom Model. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide our scholars with a two-educator classroom model as follows: Grades K-5 will receive a two-educator classroom model in all their classrooms with a Licensed Teacher and Teacher-in-Residence, and Grades 6-8 will receive a two-educator model with a Licensed Teacher and Teacher-in-Residence in their English/Language Arts and math classes only. The inclusion classrooms will employ a three-educator classroom model so that the Special Education Teacher or the ESL Teacher can provide push-in services in the classroom. Collaboration among all educators is essential for this model to work. Scholars will receive small group instruction with a ratio of 1:12 with the two-educator classroom model in Grades K-8, and an even smaller group of scholars may work with the three-educator model as warranted in the inclusion classroom.

Special Populations. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will also provide our scholars with diverse special needs with high-quality academic instruction using rigorous curricula that is fully aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards. During English/Language Arts instruction, we will provide the rigorous curricula resources and materials needed to ensure our scholars with special needs practice regularly with complex texts and academic language; ground their reading, writing, and speaking in evidence from literary and informational texts; and build knowledge through content-rich nonfiction. During math, we will provide the rigorous curricula resources and materials needed to ensure our scholars with special needs focus strongly on mastery of the major work of the grade-level standards; think coherently across grades and link to major work of the grade level; and pursue rigor through conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity in major work of the grade.

Special Education. Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will be fully licensed in Special Education and English as a Second Language, with an opportunity to pursue additional licensure over time for gifted services for our intellectually gifted scholars. Our Proposed Executive Director will collaborate with school-based leaders to modify and adjust curricula appropriately to align with the modifications and accommodations outlined in a scholar's IEP. Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will facilitate professional learning and development for all teachers to ensure that scholars with special needs receive access to grade-level rigorous curricula that have been modified and adjusted appropriately to maintain the integrity of high-quality academic instruction across all subjects for scholars with special needs in their least restrictive learning environments. Considerations for modifying and adjusting selected curricula will include ensuring that scholars with special needs' proficiency levels and progress are monitored in comparison to the general scholar population. The goals outlined in the IEP must align to state-level and local district requirements. Differentiated strategies will be research-based, with access to high-quality academic instruction that does not supplant rigorous curricula. Finally, fully licensed special education teachers who provide push-in and pull-out services will meet the needs of our scholars with special needs.

ELs. ELs identified for participation in the SEI program will receive support tailored to their unique needs. A dedicated ESL teacher and Teacher-in-Residence will be present in the two-educator classroom for the SEI program, ensuring targeted language development and academic assistance. The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will collaborate closely with the Proposed Executive Director to review and refine curricula, ensuring that language development is thoughtfully integrated into literacy and math instruction to enhance the learning experience for our ELs. Furthermore, our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will lead professional learning and development initiatives for all teachers and school-based leaders, equipping them with strategies to provide ELs access to grade-level rigorous curricula aligned with the ELPA21 English Language Proficiency Standards in the inclusion classroom and the SEI program. This approach ensures that high-quality academic instruction is maintained across all subjects while preserving the integrity of a least restrictive learning

environment. By embedding these supports, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reaffirms its commitment to fostering academic success and language acquisition for all scholars. Thus prepared, teachers will ensure opportunity and access that is essential for multilingual learners' preparation for their chosen college and career paths and life. Collaboration among all stakeholders who are responsible for servicing ELs with research-based strategies will help educators focus on the purposeful use of language acquisition and development. Considerations for the review and adjustment of selected curricula will include the use of the ELPA21 English language proficiency standards to align with the progression of the English language to teach within the context of the lesson.

Alignment with Tennessee Academic Standards. Our academic plan is explicitly designed to ensure our scholars have Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) performance levels of the Tennessee Academic Standards, ensuring readiness for TNReady assessments and long-term success. We will conduct regular curriculum reviews and adjustments to maintain alignment, while teacher professional learning and development focus on standards-based instruction.

Promoting Academic Achievement. By fostering a culture of collaboration, rigorous expectations, and continuous learning for teachers and scholars alike, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) ensures academic excellence. Innovative instructional models, such as the two-educator system and blended learning, cater to diverse learning styles, closing achievement gaps and preparing scholars for college and career readiness.

Co-Teaching Expectations in the Inclusion Classroom. LEAD Public Schools[57] describes co-teaching as the delivery of services by the Licensed Teacher in collaboration with a Special Education Teacher, ESL Teacher, and/or a Teacher-in-Residence. These educators share the responsibility of improving academic outcomes for scholars and must intentionally combine their expertise to meet the needs of scholars in the classroom.

For co-teaching to be effective at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we will create a school culture that allows teachers to have uninterrupted co-planning time. Such time allows teachers to share the instructional responsibilities of engaging all scholars during the lesson, encourages collaborative reflection on teaching practices, and fosters trusting and lasting communication. Co-planning is essential for high-quality academic instruction to be realized in the classroom, requiring teachers to think, talk, plan, create, and reflect together[58]. Effective co-planning gives teachers the opportunity to divide roles and responsibilities, identify goals and objectives for the course, plan instructional activities, and select instructional materials. Teachers may also make decisions about teaching specific class content or learning strategies, collecting data on scholar performance, executing classroom management plans, maintaining home contact, modifying curriculum and materials, providing individual assistance, taking care of daily routines, and providing visual access to content. Co-teachers will work together to assign scholars to purposeful small groups to receive small group instruction. They will plan during weekly content professional learning and development time and/or during grade-level planning periods, informing their decisions in part by looking at scholars' work. We will use several co-teaching methods, such as the principles described in the *Hanover Guide: Choosing the Right Co-Teaching Method* to support learning in the classroom (see Figure 11)[59]. Co-teachers will collaborate to decide which methods work within their classroom and with each individual lesson. This process may take trial and error initially, but it is important for our teachers to explore different options to find the best fit for scholars' learning.

Figure 11 - Description of Co-Teaching Methods

Co-Teaching Method	Description	When to Use	Level of Planning Required
One Teach, One Observe	One teacher observes specific characteristics while the other teaches. After the class session, both teachers analyze the information together.	• In new co-teaching situations • When questions arise about scholars • To monitor scholar progress • To compare target scholars to others in class	Low
One Teach, One Drift	One teacher presents material to the class while another circulates through the room and provides unobtrusive assistance to scholars.	• When the lesson lends itself to delivery by one teacher • When one teacher has expertise for the lesson • In new co-teaching situations • In lessons emphasizing a process in which scholar work needs close monitoring	Low

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)			
Parallel Teaching	Two teachers present material to the class simultaneously by dividing the class group.	• When a lower teacher-scholar ratio is needed to improve instructional efficiency • To foster scholar participation in discussions • For activities such as drill and practice, re-teaching and test review	Medium
Station Teaching	Teachers divide class group and content, and teach one group first, then the other.	• When content is complex but not hierarchical • In lessons in which part of planned instruction is review • When several topics comprise instruction	Medium
Alternate Teaching	One teacher instructs the larger group while another works with a smaller group needing more specialized attention.	• When scholars' mastery of concepts taught or about to be taught varies tremendously • When extremely high levels of mastery are expected for all scholars • When enrichment is desired • When some scholars are working in a parallel curriculum	High
Team Teaching	Both teachers work together to deliver content to the class at the same time.	• When teacher experience is comparable • During a lesson in which instructional conversation is appropriate • In situations in which the teachers have considerable experience and a high sense of comfort • When a goal of instruction is to demonstrate some type of interaction to scholars	High

English/Language Arts Instructional and Minutes. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will model our literacy instruction after the high-performing public charter schools Purpose Prep Academy in Nashville, Tennessee and Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee[60]. We will use the CKLA Amplify curriculum for literacy in grades K-5 to implement our success-driven literacy model, and its resources are aligned to the Tennessee Academic Standards. Our instructional approach to literacy will allow us to maximize instructional time. In Grades K-2, scholars will receive 150 minutes of English/Language Arts instruction every day, focusing on foundational skills strands for 60 minutes, knowledge strands for 60 minutes, and blended learning intervention using IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars for 30 minutes. In Grade 3, scholars will receive 150 minutes of English/Language Arts instruction on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, focusing on integrated foundational skills and knowledge strands for 120 minutes and blended learning intervention using IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only for 30 minutes; 120 minutes on Wednesdays due to early release for staff professional learning and development. In Grades 4-5, scholars will receive 120 minutes of English/Language Arts instruction every day, focusing on integrated foundational skills and knowledge strands for 90 minutes and blended learning intervention using IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only for 30 minutes. In Grades 6-8, scholars will receive 90 minutes of English/Language Arts instruction on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, focusing on whole class learning, small group learning, independent learning, writing workshops, and blended learning intervention using IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only for 30 minutes; 90 minutes on Wednesdays due to early release for staff professional learning and development.

Math Instructional and Minutes. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide our scholars with a research-based, rigorous math curriculum that fully aligns to Tennessee Academic Standards. Our scholars will be required to explain their thinking through the representation of models and brainstorm and discuss multiple ways to solve real-world problems through the adoption of the enVision Mathematics curriculum. This curriculum will help us to focus on deep conceptual math understanding aided by visual models, personalized learning, and three-act tasks. This curriculum will also provide family engagement resources that provide essential information for families to use in supporting their scholars at home. Curriculum lessons start with PBL, and scholars must think critically about a real-world math problem, evaluate options, collaborate, and present solutions. Our instructional approach to math will allow us to maximize instructional time with 100 minutes of instruction on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, focusing on math fluency; procedural, conceptual, and application math skills; small group instruction, and blended learning intervention using IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only for 30 minutes; 75 minutes on Wednesdays for Grades K-2 due to early release for staff professional learning and development, and 60 minutes on Wednesdays for Grades 6-8 due to early release for staff professional learning and development.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Science Instruction. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide our scholars with a research-based, rigorous curriculum in science that fully aligns to Tennessee Academic Standards. In Grades K-8, we will use the STEMscopes science curriculum that covers grade-level science standards using the 5E + IA framework: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate, Intervention, and Acceleration. Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee, a high-performing charter school, engages scholars beginning in kindergarten in science experiments and activities daily to ensure scholars gain an understanding through IBL. Teachers will deliver lessons using the 5E Model for Inquiry-Based Science. Scholars will also read informational texts and complete writing tasks to reinforce and support both our literacy instruction and our PLB approach to math instruction. These texts will include relevant articles, textbook excerpts, and grade-appropriate books to build scholars' interest and knowledge of various topics in science using IBL content literacy across all grade levels.

Social Studies Instruction. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide our scholars with a research-based, rigorous curriculum in social studies that fully aligns to Tennessee Academic Standards. In Grades K-2, we will use Studies Weekly Social Studies curriculum. In Grades 3-8, we will use the Tennessee Gallopade Social Studies curriculum. Both curricula resources provide a variety of resources in multiple formats, along with instructional strategies and implementation ideas, so that teachers can tailor their lessons to the specific needs of their classes to create a customized learning experience for scholars of all learning styles. Both curricula resources also equip teachers with the materials designed to meet the needs of every learner, with a state-specific, standards-aligned, comprehensive curriculum program. They provide an extensive system that allows teachers to guide scholars through customized learning experiences that positively impacts their mastery of the social studies standards. Scholars will transfer their skills learned in literacy to engage in IBL tasks centered around the Habit of Evidence and the Habit of Discussion for the ongoing development of their speaking and listening skills.

Arts/Electives Instruction. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will incorporate ABL into our instructional program through the arts/electives classes once we are fully developed as a K-8 school. Over time, we will gradually add these classes to our school model. With the arts being an essential component of our school design, we will ensure scholars participate in their chosen arts paths to include media and visual art, vocal and instrumental performance, and theater and dance. ABL helps scholars find personal meaning and relevance in their learning and supports them in meeting the goals they set for themselves. ABL encourages multiple pathways to demonstrate learning through critical and creative thinking, collaboration, character development, and assessment. Self-expression will, in turn, increase scholars' character development through cultivating their communication skills and collaboration. Leaders and teachers will provide scholars with multiple opportunities to display their talents through creative thinking and expression. Creative thinking and expression give scholars access to the skills needed to learn and grow from personal and team failures and increase their self-confidence and capacity to show up humanly well every day to model what it looks and feels like to be a champion, regardless of their challenges and circumstances. All scholars will be required to take the elective classes in physical education and competitive sports training, Spanish as foreign language, and technology. These classes will be taught by fully licensed teachers in their respective subjects and will align to Tennessee Academic Standards.

Instructional Methods. Like educator experts at Circle City Prep in Indianapolis, Indiana, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will meet the needs of diverse learners using a variety of research-based strategies to sustain the sacredness of maximized institutional time[61]. School leaders will be properly trained on how to coach teachers and staff using the following resources: *Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for Management and Rigor*, *Teach Like a Champion*, and the *Relay Graduate School of Education Principal Instructional Leadership Quick Reference Guide*. These materials provide practical instructional support that help teachers make significant growth in their instructional delivery through bite-sized feedback, practice, and implementation from observers.

Based on best practices from high-performing schools and to ensure differentiated instruction for all learners, the following are key components of our instructional plan: ABL, data-driven decisions, data-driven instruction, extended time, goal setting, habits of discussion, habits of evidence, IBL, PBL, rap/rhythm/rhyme, small group instruction, and the two-teacher model in literacy and math. Figure 12 provides a brief description of each component.

Figure 12 - Instructional Methods

Best Practice	Description
Asset-based Learning (ABL)	ABL aligns to our vision for high-quality academic instruction in the Arts/electives and character development to strengthen scholars' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through self-expression in media and visual art, vocal and instrumental performance, theater and dance, physical education and competitive sports training, Spanish as foreign language, and technology. ABL is a scholar-centered approach to learning that focuses on the character development and unique strengths of individual scholars as they make positive contributions to their peers and learning communities. ABL helps scholars find personal meaning and relevance in their learning and supports them in meeting the goals they set for themselves. ABL encourages multiple pathways to demonstrate learning through critical and creative thinking, collaboration, character development, and assessment.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)	
Data-Driven Decision Making	Our teachers, leaders and staff members will immerse ourselves in a data-driven culture to ensure that every decision we make is in the best interest of what our scholars and families deserve. We will review data weekly in academics, school culture, and operations to ensure we are functioning healthily and holistically.
Data-Driven Instruction	Our teachers and instructional leaders will engage in weekly data meetings for formative assessments using the See It, Name It, Do It structure in the *Relay Graduate School of Education Principal Instructional Leadership Quick Reference Guide*. After scholars take their interim and benchmark assessments at the end of each learning cycle, we will also perform a more comprehensive dive of the data to make informed decisions about instruction that will become the focus of the new learning cycle with intentional walkthroughs and feedback given to teachers on the progress of our goals. As part of both processes of data-driven instruction, looking at scholar work and self-reflecting on teacher practices will always be at the center of how we plan to meet the needs of our scholars. Teacher teams will collaborate with their instructional coaches to develop reteaching structures that will address gaps in mastery of standards and skills, and they will practice reteaching parts of the lesson to ensure our practices are aligned with hopes to achieve the expected outcomes.
Extended Time	We will provide 180 days of instruction every school year. Our hours of operation will be from 7:30 am to 3:45 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; and from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm on Wednesdays. Our instructional program will have a positive impact on academic outcomes for scholars who need the additional support, as evidenced by results from BES schools Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee, and Purpose Prep in Nashville, Tennessee.
Goal Setting	Our scholars will learn the importance of setting short-term SMART goals to meet milestones in academics and character development and long-term goals toward their chosen college and career paths. During our advisory and community circle events, scholars will have the opportunity to revisit their goals and adjust based on the present level of performance. Our scholars will also engage in scholar-led conferences where they present their own data to their accountability team (i.e., teachers, parents/guardians, and one other person of their choice) to support their learning and development over time.
Habits of Discussion	Our scholars will learn how to maintain effective, scholarly discourse with their teachers and peers beginning in kindergarten. As a schoolwide initiative, Habits of Discussion will be embedded into our instructional program in every classroom. Our teachers will provide scholars with sentence stems to support their development of forming sentences during a discussion. As scholars transition from grade to grade, the sentence stems will become more complex to reflect their learning and development with language skills, allowing all classes to have normed and consistent expectations for how scholars participate in academic discussions. Habits of Discussion require scholars to explain their thinking, agree and disagree with one another, and build on the ideas of their peers.
Habits of Evidence	Our scholars will learn how to annotate with purpose and cite key evidence in their responses beginning in kindergarten. As a schoolwide initiative, Habits of Evidence will be embedded into our instructional program in every classroom. Our teachers will provide scholars with sentence stems to support their development of forming sentences during a writing task. As our scholars transition from grade to grade, the sentence stems will become more complex to reflect their learning and development with writing skills, allowing all classes to have normed and consistent expectations for how scholars participate in academic writing. Habits of Evidence require scholars to summarize, analyze, find the best evidence, agree and disagree with other writers, and build on the ideas of their peers.
Inquiry-based Learning (IBL)	IBL aligns to our vision for high-quality academic instruction in writing and research, first, with the belief that leaders and teachers model the love of reading all types of texts for scholars. IBL is a scholar-centered approach to learning that focuses on the essential question and other related questions used to address standards or learning outcomes throughout the unit. IBL provides scholars with time and space to be critical and creative thinkers, and even to ask their own questions. Scholars are usually engaged in writing reports, essays, and completing digital tasks that may either solve a specific problem or answer a specific question to achieve the end goal.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)	
	This academic habit is cultivated through providing scholars with multiple opportunities to access and read school and grade-level appropriate books of their choice in every classroom so that they become motivated to read more intrinsically along the way in their science, reading, writing, and social studies classes. All scholars deserve this opportunity to engage with grade-level, complex texts in all their classes that are engaging and appropriately relatable to their personal life experiences. Second, IBL aligns to our vision for high-quality academic instruction in science and research, rooted in giving scholars access to complex texts so that they understand text structures, language features, text purpose, and knowledge demands. High-quality instruction supports scholars being able to read and annotate multiple texts, ask and answer questions, write and cite relevant textual evidence, understand and solve contextually complex challenges, and engage in discourse about multiple texts with the teacher as the facilitator. When teachers and leaders plan for potential scholar misconceptions, appropriate scaffolds, accommodations, and/or modifications are readily accessible to support, not rescue, the learning of all scholars in a way that maintains high expectations in the classroom.
Project-based Learning (PBL)	PBL aligns to our vision for high-quality instruction in science, math, and technology. Leaders and teachers model the love of numbers so that scholars may achieve the absolute value of numeracy, which is freedom. Love and freedom are contagious, and scholars can feel them in the classroom when high-quality academic instruction is taking place in their science, math, and technology classes. What leaders and teachers say and do to support learning in the science, math and technology classroom is a major predictor of scholar outcomes. PBL is a scholar-centered approach to learning that allows scholars to create products to address standards or learning outcomes throughout the unit. PBL engages scholars in the process of solving specific problems through the creation of physical products as they develop prototypes, review and observe, adjust and refine, and repeat processes towards achieving the end goal. Second, PBL aligns with our vision for high-quality academic instruction in science, math, and technology by allowing our scholars to engage in content through collaborative engagement using grade-level PBL tasks that challenge them to do the cognitive thinking and heavy-lifting, and to engage in rich discussion that explores their conceptual understanding of content. What this looks like in practice is leaders and teachers proactively planning for scholars' misconceptions and providing scholars with multiple opportunities to master skills and concepts through sustained independent and collaborative practices. Leaders and teachers also provide scholars with real-time feedback through academic monitoring to push their thinking to the desired outcomes with opportunities to debrief the learning with scholars, and to stamp their conceptual understanding.
Rap, Rhythm, and Rhyme	Like education experts at Circle City Prep in Indianapolis, we believe chanting and rhyming creates energy and excitement about learning and helps our scholars remember key concepts. We will use this method to engage and excite all learners in the classroom.
Small Group Instruction	Small group instruction is an essential part of our instructional model that allows us to differentiate learning for scholars as needed and to remediate any skill gaps they may have with academic content. We will always consult scholar data to inform our decisions about supporting them in small groups to ensure we are explicit about addressing their specific needs.
Two-Educator Classroom Model in Literacy & Math	Our Two-Educator Classroom Model consists of one fully Licensed Teacher as defined by the Tennessee Department of Education who has accomplished the following: Completed an approved educator preparation program; submitted passing scores on all required content and pedagogical assessments as defined in Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy (5.102); and met Tennessee Literacy Success Act requirements as evidenced by completion of a qualifying training or assessment, if applicable. The two-educator model allows scholars to receive small group instruction with a ratio of 1:12 in Grades K-8. Our Two-Educator Model in the classroom may also consist of one New to Education Practitioner as defined by the Tennessee Department of Education; also known as a Licensed Teacher at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The practitioner teacher license is valid for three years. Tennessee offers a practitioner license in many endorsement areas, allowing individuals to serve as classroom teachers. At a minimum, candidates interested in the practitioner teacher license must: be at least 18 years old; hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited college or

university; be enrolled in or have completed an approved educator preparation program, and be recommended for licensure by the program provider; meet all professional assessment requirements as specified by the State Board of Education; meet requirements in at least one area of endorsement; meet Tennessee Literacy Success Act requirements, if applicable; and ensure that the Department has official transcripts of all degrees earned through a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.

We will also consider out-of-state teacher candidates who are licensed and will also be issued a practitioner teacher license; also known as a Licensed Teacher at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The practitioner teacher license is an initial license, valid for three years. To be issued a practitioner license using a valid out-of-state initial-level license, an applicant must: hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university; hold an initial level license in a state other than Tennessee; submit a recommendation using the Out-of-State Educator Preparation Verification form from the out-of-state education preparation program where the educator completed a preparation program (all out-of-state providers must meet conditions stipulated in State Board Rule 0520-02-04); meet Tennessee Literacy Success Act requirements as evidenced by completion of a qualifying training or assessment, if applicable; and ensure that the department has official transcripts of all credits earned through an institution of higher education.

Our Two-Educator Classroom Model also consists of one Teacher-in-Residence who will support scholars in receiving small group instruction with a ratio of 1:12 in Grades K-8. Our Three-Educator Model in the classroom consists of one Licensed Educator, one Teacher-in-Residence, and either the Licensed Special Education Teacher or the Licensed ESL Teacher who will push in to support classroom instruction in the inclusion classroom setting; even smaller groups in the three-teacher model as warranted in the inclusion classroom. The SEI program consists of one Licensed ESL Teacher and Teacher-in-Residence who will support scholars in receiving small group instruction.

We will leverage connections with various organizations including, but not limited to local colleges/universities with education programs, Teach for America, Nashville Teacher Residency, Relay Graduate School of Education, and BES to recruit high-quality teachers, school leaders, and staff members.

Teachers-in-Residence. Considering that a Teacher-in-Residence is a non-licensed position with responsibilities exceeding those of a traditional Educational Assistant, we will set the salary between the typical earnings of an Educational Assistant and a Licensed Teacher (see Section 2.4h). The salary range will acknowledge the Teacher-in-Residence's commitment to professional learning and development, and the added responsibilities compared to standard Educational Assistants.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Benchmarks of Success: Management and Rigor Trajectories. Our academic plan will employ the *Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence*. These instructional methods provide practical, incremental strategies to enhance instructional delivery and academic outcomes. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure that every teacher is properly trained to establish a strong foundation in both trajectory expectations in the classroom. Scholars will be given mutual respect and grace in the classroom; however, grace does not displace accountability. Like educator experts at Las Vegas Collegiate Academy, we will establish management trajectory expectations using the *Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence*, which provides instructional leaders with the top action steps used to launch teacher learning and development in classroom management throughout the entire school year[62].

Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, the Chief Schools Officer for High Schools and K-12 Content Development at Uncommon Schools, has become a leading figure in school leadership, professional development, and data-driven instruction[63]. In Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers, Bambrick-Santoyo lays out a compelling case for how school leaders, administrators, and coaches can guide new teachers to develop their instructional practice efficiently and effectively, making an immediate impact on the lives of their scholars. In focusing on new teacher quality, Bambrick-Santoyo recognizes the immense power teachers have in shaping the lives of their scholars as well as the corresponding responsibility for coaches to guide their teachers to success. Across the nation however, Bambrick-Santoyo notes: "Teachers aren't receiving much coaching. Consequently, educators are very rarely asked to practice the micro-skills that will make them better at teaching, especially not under the supervision of an expert who can help them get better on the spot".

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers is built from the guiding concept that what is actionable is "practicable" and therefore able to respond to effective coaching[64]. Bambrick-Santoyo begins by identifying and unpacking three core principles of coaching:

- Go Granular: Break teaching down into discrete skills to be practiced successively and cumulatively.
- Plan, Practice, Follow Up, Repeat: Coach a teacher through effective practice.
- Make Feedback More Frequent: Make the most of every observation by increasing the frequency of feedback.

The text then moves into a detailed scope and sequence for rapidly improving teacher practice. Bambrick-Santoyo outlines how to support teachers with classroom management and rigorous instruction by identifying a prioritized list of key action steps with guidance on when to use the strategy, what it looks/sounds like, and scenarios for practicing. For example, the scope and sequence for classroom management begins with "routines and procedures 101" then scaffolds up to using a "strong voice", giving clear directions, and actively scanning the room. For instructional rigor, the sequence guides leaders through coaching on lesson planning, use of examples, meaningful independent practice and methods for checking for understanding. The Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence is full of strong real-classroom examples, recommendations for implementation, printable resources and a thorough video library of great coaching in action.

In Get Better Faster: A 90-Day Plan for Coaching New Teachers, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo shares instructive tools of how school leaders can effectively guide new teachers to success[65]. Over the course of the book, the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence breaks down the most critical actions leaders and teachers must enact to achieve exemplary results. Designed for coaches as well as beginning teachers, this scope and sequence is an integral coaching tool for any school leader eager to help their teachers succeed. The book focuses on actionable and "practicable" strategies that drive effective coaching and teaching. By practicing the concrete actions and micro-skills listed in the scope and sequence, teachers will improve their ability to lead a class, producing a steady chain reaction of future teaching success.

The Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence is a research-based instructional coaching tool that provides teachers with personalized support to provide high-quality academic instruction in the classroom using rigorous curricula and research-based instructional strategies[66]. Paired with the weekly coaching tool (or weekly data meeting tool), the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence focuses on partnering with the teacher as a colleague; giving teachers some autonomy and flexibility to make final decisions on instructional goals, practices to adopt, and interpreting data; watching video observations of practices aligned to research-based strategies and engaging in reflective coaching conversations.

The process of using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence allows teachers and instructional coaches to identify, learn and improve classroom practices to reach desired outcomes for scholars. During this process, the teacher gains a clear picture of their present reality by watching a video of their instruction and identifies a scholar-focused goal and teaching strategy with support from the instructional coach to improve instruction. The coach shares different research-based teaching strategies using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence, and models while the teacher observes, prompting the teacher to practice next. After the instructional coaching session, the teacher implements the practice in the classroom. Data is collected on scholar progress and the teacher's implementation of the process. The instructional coach and teacher meet after the lesson to confirm next steps and how to monitor progress. Our teachers will engage in instructional coaching using the See It, Name It, Do It process follows:

- **See It**
  - Part 1: Coaches create opportunities for the teacher to see their success from a previously observed lesson by providing precise praise.
  - Part 2: During classroom observation, the coach identifies a high-leverage skill for improvement. Coaches use pre-developed charts or guides to help them identify practices for improvement.
  - During the follow-up coaching meeting, the coach shows the teacher an exemplary video model (from an online library), or alternatively, models the desired behavior personally. The teacher is then encouraged to compare this demonstration with their own practice for the skill in question.
- **Name It:** Once improvement areas are identified, the coach helps the teacher find the correct action step. The action step must be observable, high leverage, and manageable. The coach asks questions to narrow the focus on a specific action step and ensure that the teacher understands the rationale for that action step.
- **Do It:** Teachers engage in active practice of the action step alongside the coach during the coaching meeting. This involves role playing and/or incorporating scripted changes into the teacher's lessons. The coach would provide the teacher with feedback and further modeling as needed. Subsequently, during the next classroom observation, the coach will intentionally look for the implementation of the chosen action step.

These strategies are grounded in extensive research and used by multiple high-performing charter schools. The management trajectory expectations include five phases to support teachers. We will use the management trajectory expectations to focus on school-wide action steps aligned to our school culture plan, and we will strategically differentiate action steps to support teachers where they land in terms of learning and development in specific management trajectory phases. See Section 1.8(e) in this charter application to review the strategies we will use to manage classrooms.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure that every teacher is properly trained to establish a strong foundation by applying rigor trajectory expectations in the classroom. Scholars will engage in tasks with the use of rigorous curricula daily, and they will have multiple opportunities to grapple with grade-level tasks independently and collaboratively. We will establish rigor trajectory expectations using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence, which provides instructional leaders with the top action steps used to launch teacher learning and development in high-quality academic instruction throughout the entire school year[67].

These strategies are grounded in extensive research and used by multiple high-performing charter schools. Within the rigor trajectory expectations five phases support teachers. We will use the rigor trajectory expectations to focus on school-wide action steps aligned to our school academic plan, and we will strategically differentiate action steps to support teachers where they land in terms of learning and development in specific rigor trajectory phases as outlined in Figure 13.

Figure 13 - Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence Rigor Trajectory

Get Better Faster Scope & Sequence: Rigor Trajectory	
Phase 1: Summer Professional Development & Learning to Write & Internalize Lesson Plans	
What	**How**

Develop Effective Lesson Plans 101: Build the foundation of an effective lesson rooted in what scholars need to learn.	• Write precise learning objectives that are:
	  ○ Data-driven (rooted in what scholars need to learn based on end-goal assessments and analysis of assessments results).
	  ○ Curriculum Plan-Driven
	  ○ Able to be accomplished in one lesson.
	• Deliver a basic "I Do" as a core part of the lesson.
	• Design an exit ticket (brief end assessment) aligned to the objective.

Internalize Existing Lesson Plans: Making existing plans your own.	• Identify the moment of most productive struggle in the lesson by articulating what scholars need to know and be able to do to master it. • Internalize and rehearse key parts of the lesson, including the "I Do" part of the lesson and all key instructions. • Build time stamps into the lesson and follow them. • Adjust the lesson plan to target the knowledge and skills scholars need.

Write an Exemplar: Set the Bar for Excellence	• Script out ideal responses you want scholars to produce during independent practice.
	  ○ Humanities: What is an ideal answer you want scholars to give during the class discussion?
	  ○ STEM: If they get this right and you ask them why, what do you want them to say?

Phase 2: Roll Out Academic Routines	
What	**How**
Independent Practice: Set up daily routines that build opportunities for scholars to practice independently.	• Write first, talk second by giving scholars writing tasks to complete prior to class discussion, so that every scholar answers independently before hearing peer contributions. • Implement a daily entry prompt (Do Now) to either introduce the objective or review materials from the previous day. • Implement and review a longer independent practice and/or a daily Exit Ticket to see how many scholars mastered the concept.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)	

Academic Monitoring 101: Check scholars' independent work to determine whether they are learning and what feedback is needed.	• Create and implement a monitoring pathway.
	  ○ Name the Lap: Announce what you will be looking for and how you will code work and give feedback as you circulate.
	  ○ Monitor the faster writers first to gather trends, then the scholars who need more support.
	• "Pen in Hand": Give written feedback to scholar work.
	  ○ Compare answers to the exemplar to determine what scholars are missing.
	  ○ Give quick feedback (e.g., star, circle, pre-established coding system).
	  ○ Cue scholars to revise answers using minimal verbal intervention (e.g., affirm the effort, name the error, ask them to fix it).
	• Gather data while monitoring and prepare to respond.
	  ○ Track scholar responses as ideal, almost there, or further off.
	  ○ Determine how to respond by stopping the class for a quick fix, model or discourse (e.g., show call or activate knowledge).

Guided Discourse 101: Launch the discourse cycle with the prioritized high-rigor question.	• Everybody writes or show-calls (e.g., post scholar work, either an exemplar or incorrect response). • Turn-and-Talk • Cold-call, then volleyball (e.g., multiple scholars speak before the teacher). • Prompt for and praise basic Habits of Discussion to strengthen conversation and listening skills (e.g., build, evaluate, agree, disagree, etc.). • Stamp the key understanding: "What are the keys to remember"?
Phase 3: Model	
What	**How**

Model: Model for scholars how to think, solve, and/or write.	• Narrow the focus to the thinking scholars are struggling with.
	• Give scholars a clear listening/note-taking task that fosters active listening of the model, and then debrief the model.
	  ○ "What did I do in my model"?
	  ○ "What are the key things to remember when you are doing the same in your own work"?
	• Model the thinking, not just the procedure.
	  ○ Model replicable thinking steps that scholars can follow.
	  ○ Vary the think-aloud in tone and cadence from the normal "teacher" voice to highlight the thinking skills.
	• We Do and You Do: Give scholars opportunities to practice with your guidance.

Check for Whole-Group Understanding: Gather evidence on whole-group learning.	• Target the Error: Focus on the questions where scholars most struggle to answer correctly and/or the area of most productive struggle.
	• Poll the room to determine how scholars are answering a certain question.
	  ○ "How many chose letter A? B? C? D"?
	  ○ Scholars answer the question on the whiteboard: "Hold up your whiteboards on the count of three…".

Phase 4: Lead Scholar Discourse	

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)

What	How

Universal Prompts: Push the thinking back on the scholars through universal prompts that can be used at any point.	• Revoice: Prompt scholars to paraphrase others' reasoning.
	  ○ "If I hear you correctly, you seem to say X. Is that right"?
	  ○ "Are you really saying [paraphrase or rework their argument to see if they still defend it]"?
	• Press for Reasoning: Prompt scholars to elaborate or justify their answer with evidence.
	  ○ "Tell me more".
	  ○ "Why or why not"?
	  ○ "How do you know"?
	  ○ "Prove it"?
	  ○ "Why is that important"?

Activate Knowledge: Prompt scholars to access their knowledge.	• Point scholars to resources (e.g., word wall, notes, texts, etc.). • "What do we know about _____"?
Strategically Call on scholars: Use scholar data to call on scholars based on their learning needs.	• Create a sequence of scholars to call on based on the rigor of each prompt and a review of scholar work (e.g., first ask a scholar who is struggling, then one who is partially there, then almost there, etc.). • Launch discourse by calling on a scholar with a limited understanding. • Call on scholars whose responses are closer to the exemplar when the class is struggling. • Call on scholars with originally limited response to stamp new understanding.
Deepen & Stretch It	
What	**How**

Stretch It: Once you have an "almost there" response, use scripted prompts to push for depth and conceptual understanding.	• Problematize by creating tension.
	  ○ Name the Debate: " Some of your say X. Some of you say Y. What do you think"?
	  ○ Provoke Debate: "(Name) would say (counterargument). How would you respond?
	  ○ Play Critic: "I disagree. I actually think…" or "Who can play the critic"?
	  ○ Feign Ignorance: "I don't understand. I was thinking…".
	• Sophisticate by adding complexity.
	  ○ Apply with Different or New Context/Perspective: "Consider 2x+5y=4. Does our rule apply"?
	  ○ Give a Hypothetical Scenario: "What if…".
	  ○ Consider Alternatives: "What's another way we could interpret this"?
	  ○ Generalize: "So what is the emerging rule we could apply to all problems like this one"?

Section 1.2d: Provide evidence that demonstrates how the school's academic plan will improve scholar performance and close achievement gaps specifically for the school's target scholar population and scholars with diverse needs.

The core of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s academic plan and philosophy is to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality instruction. This approach fosters a love for learning, promotes innovation and creativity, and supports personal growth. Our mission is to create learning experiences that empower scholars to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential while preparing for college and career success. We will implement evidence-based practices to improve scholar performance and close achievement gaps, particularly for our target population of scholars in La Vergne

and Smyrna and for scholars with diverse needs. With these beliefs, we have structured our academic model and design on the following principles outlined in Figure 14.

Figure 14 - Principles of Design and Core Mission Components

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Principles of Design and Core Mission Components	
SMART-integrated Curriculum Framework	Novus SMART Academy's academic plan is designed to enhance scholar performance and bridge achievement gaps by implementing a SMART-integrated curriculum framework with Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology for grades K-8. This approach aligns with evidence-based practices that have demonstrated success in similar educational settings. Research shows that schools with a mission-driven focus, emphasizing rigorous curricula and high-quality instruction, outperform local district schools serving similar populations. These schools often meet or exceed state testing averages in mathematics and reading, contributing to closing achievement gaps[68]. Integrating subjects such as Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology benefit learning by providing a more cohesive and engaging educational experience. This interdisciplinary approach fosters critical thinking and creativity, essential skills for academic success[69]. Novus SMART Academy aims to provide all scholars, including those with diverse needs, access to high-quality education. This approach is designed to foster a love for learning, promote innovation and creativity, and support personal growth, ultimately preparing scholars for college and career success.
College and Career Exploration	Implementing a comprehensive academic plan that integrates rigorous curricula with college and career exploration from an early age can significantly enhance scholar performance and help close achievement gaps, particularly for diverse scholar populations. Research indicates that early exposure to career exploration fosters self-awareness, critical thinking, and goal-setting skills among scholars. According to the Association for Career and Technical Education, elementary school is a pivotal time when scholars benefit from building self-awareness, learning about potential careers, and developing plans for future goals. This process not only engages scholars but also sets them on a path to success by making learning relevant to their future aspirations[70]. Evidence-based educational strategies have also shown to improve performance among minority and low socioeconomic status scholars. A systematic review published in *Frontiers in Education* found that targeted interventions focusing on reading abilities and subject-specific skills are effective in enhancing academic outcomes for these groups. Additionally, whole-school and community-based projects, along with innovative pedagogies, contribute to closing achievement gaps[71]. To effectively implement these strategies, it is crucial to establish benchmarks and track progress. Setting reasonable yet challenging goals and utilizing formative assessments allow educators to monitor scholar development, identify areas of need, and provide targeted support. This approach ensures that all scholars receive the necessary resources to succeed academically[72]. By integrating rigorous curricula with early college and career exploration, and by employing evidence-based practices tailored to the needs of diverse learners, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will create an environment that promotes academic excellence. This comprehensive approach prepares scholars not only for academic success but also for their chosen college and career paths.
Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and WEL-Being	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to providing school experiences that foster personal growth and character development for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff. Our Noble Core Values cultivate self-awareness and essential life skills, empowering individuals to lead purposeful lives and make a lasting impact on their communities. To enhance collaboration and team-building, we will integrate ABL in the arts and electives. Our MTSS-Behavior program will provide individualized academic and behavior support through prescribed learning paths in intervention and enrichment. We will implement MTSS-Behavior through integrating SEL into our character education and development plan using the *CharacterStrong* curriculum. This plan addresses individual scholars' behavioral needs while also fostering a positive schoolwide culture.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards (Required for All Sponsors)	
	SEL and character education are embedded into daily morning advisory sessions, where grade-appropriate materials are used to cultivate social and emotional skills. Morning meetings and announcements celebrate scholars, teachers, and school leaders recognized as "Novus Nobles" for their positive contributions to our community. SEL programs significantly enhance academic outcomes while improving scholars' social-emotional skills. A meta-analysis by CASEL found that SEL programs contribute to long-term academic growth comparable to traditional academic support programs[73]. Similarly, Panorama Education highlights that SEL programs positively impact scholar behavior and long-term academic success[74]. SEL initiatives are particularly effective for scholars from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research published in *Social Forces* reveals that disparities in socio-emotional skills contribute to achievement gaps between socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged scholars[75]. SEL programs help bridge this gap by fostering emotional intelligence and resilience. Furthermore, scholars who feel emotionally supported by peers and educators exhibit higher academic achievement and attendance rates, with SEL programs contributing to an 11% increase in both areas. SEL programs also promote emotional well-being by reducing stress and improving scholars' attitudes toward themselves and others. This holistic development fosters a supportive learning environment, further contributing to academic success[76]. By integrating Character Education through SEL and well-being programs, Novus SMART Academy will create a nurturing educational environment that not only enhances academic performance but also equips scholars with essential life skills. Our approach ensures that every scholar is prepared for future college and career success while developing a strong sense of self and community.
Structured English Immersion	Integrating the SEI program into Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s academic plan will significantly enhance English language proficiency among ELs identified to participate in the program. SEI is recognized as an effective instructional model for ELs, emphasizing instruction in English to facilitate rapid language acquisition. The Tennessee Department of Education outlines various program models for EL instruction, including Structured English Immersion. This model is designed to immerse ELs in English-language instruction, accelerating their proficiency and enabling them to access grade-level content more effectively[77]. To implement the SEI program effectively, Novus SMART Academy will adopt the following strategies as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education. We will conduct all SEI classes in English, using simplified language and visual aids to support comprehension. We will provide linguistic accommodations, such as visual aids, graphic organizers, and modified texts, to make content accessible while promoting language development. Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will provide ongoing professional learning and development training educators on SEI methodologies and best practices to ensure effective instruction. Our ESL Teachers will develop ILPs for ELs to tailor instruction to their specific language proficiency levels and academic needs. Implementing SEI will lead to accelerated English proficiency, which will enable ELs to engage with academic content more effectively. As ELs become more proficient in English, they will better comprehend and master grade-level curricula, closing achievement gaps. SEI promotes integration into the school community, helping ELs navigate social and academic settings confidently.
High-quality Academic Instruction with Rigorous Curricula	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s commitment to providing high-quality academic instruction through rigorous curricula that enhances scholar performance and narrows achievement gaps, particularly among diverse scholar populations. Rigorous curricula challenge scholars to think innovatively and develop deeper understandings of key concepts, leading to increased engagement and academic growth[78]. This approach not only enhances scholar interest but also facilitates easier and more thorough learning[79]. Research also supports the effectiveness of PBL and IBL in fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. These methods encourage scholars to explore and apply knowledge actively, leading to improved engagement and understanding[80]. Providing teachers with curriculum-based professional learning and development opportunities has been linked to significant improvements in scholar

achievement. Such professional development ensures that educators are well-prepared to deliver high-quality instruction, thereby enhancing scholar learning outcomes[81]. By integrating rigorous, curricula and supporting educators through ongoing professional development, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is well-positioned to improve scholar performance and close achievement gaps among its diverse scholar population.

Core Components

Grade Bands. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be divided into the following grade bands: Grades K-2, Grade 3-5, and Grades 6-8. Each grade band will implement high-quality academic instruction to prepare scholars for the next division of instruction as they transition from year to year.

Instructional Time. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maximize the sacredness of core instructional time by providing all scholars with an extended instructional learning day to provide scholars with intentional supports that are research-based and scientifically proven to improve the quality of scholar experience and academic outcomes in literacy and math. See Figure 15 below.

Figure 15 – Instructional Minutes in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies

Grade Levels	English/Language Arts	Math	Science & Social Studies
Grades K-2	150 minutes daily	80 minutes daily	120 minutes per week, respectively.
Grades 3-5	120 minutes daily	90 minutes daily	180 minutes in Science per week. 160 minutes in Social Studies per week.
Grades 6-8	90 minutes on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays. 60 minutes on Wednesdays.	90 minutes on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays. 60 minutes on Wednesdays.	55 minutes on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays for Science and Social Studies, respectively. 60 minutes on Wednesdays for Science and Social Studies, respectively.

- **MTSS-Academics.** All scholars will receive high-quality academic intervention support on Mondays through Thursdays for 60 minutes in Grades K-8 using our MTSS-Academics plan.
  - Tier I scholars will receive academic enrichment in literacy that aligns to IBL tasks and math that aligns to PBL tasks.
  - Tier II and Tier III scholars will receive targeted literacy and math intervention support and tasks based on their greatest deficit using research-based curricula that aligns to the state of Tennessee MTSS-Academics model. Scholars will also receive biweekly (Tier II) or weekly (Tier III) progress monitoring to monitor rate of academic growth and performance over time.
    - Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II.
    - Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.
- **Literacy Instruction.** Literacy instruction will focus on Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards in English/Language Arts by developing scholars' critical and creative thinking skills using IBL tasks.
- **Math Instruction.** Math instruction will focus on Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards in math by developing scholars' critical thinking skills and conceptual understanding using PBL tasks.
- **Science Instruction.** Science instruction will focus on Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards in Science by developing scholars' critical and creative thinking skills and conceptual understanding using IBL tasks and PBL tasks. We believe that hands-on experiences in science help scholars to master complex science concepts.
- **Social Studies Instruction.** Social studies instruction will focus on Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards in Social Studies by developing scholars' critical

and creative thinking skills using IBL. We want scholars to build upon experiences with their families, schools, and communities as an introduction to social studies in Grade 6.

- **Teacher Support and Professional Learning and Development.** With our 180-day school calendar, teachers, school leaders, and staff will receive at least 82 days of professional learning and development throughout the entire school year to include 23 full day sessions, 27 collaborative planning sessions, and 32 1:1 coaching sessions.
- **Continuous Development.** Within these 82 days of professional learning and development, teachers, school leaders, and staff will receive 2 hours of professional learning and development weekly focused on data-driven decision-making and deliberate practice in academics, school culture, and operations to support our schoolwide goals.
- **Character Education.** Deliberate positive character development will focus on the following core values: Beacon of Joy, Character Development, and Habits for Humanity.

Commitment to Rigorous Curricula. Our academic plan is rooted in teaching practices that support all our scholars, which includes 35% ELs, 70% economically disadvantaged scholars, and 25% scholars with disabilities. By integrating teaching practices that support all our scholars, we will ensure that every scholar can connect with the content, fostering deeper understanding and engagement. Our curricula are fully aligned with Tennessee Academic Standards, vetted by EdReports, and modeled after high-performing schools like Purpose Preparatory Academy and Valor Collegiate Academies. Both schools have achieved notable success, with Purpose Prep ranking in the top 5% of schools statewide. This alignment and rigor will help ensure that scholars at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) transition from grade to grade with proficiency in core subjects, setting them up for long-term success.

Blended Learning and Technology Integration. Our blended learning model leverages adaptive technology platforms, including IXL and Imagine MyPath, to deliver personalized instruction tailored to each scholar's needs. Scholars will receive daily intervention time during literacy and math blocks to address skill deficits and misconceptions. For example, EL scholars will use Imagine MyPath to build proficiency in English language arts and math, ensuring their progress aligns with grade-level standards. Blended learning also allows teachers to collect real-time data, analyze performance, and adapt instruction to address individual scholar needs. Research has shown that personalized learning pathways, such as those provided by IXL, enhance scholar outcomes by targeting specific gaps and reinforcing mastery. This model is particularly effective for scholars with IEPs, 504 plans, or who are performing below grade level.

Small Group Instruction and the Two-Educator Model. Our two-educator classroom model reduces the teacher-to-scholar ratio to 1:12, enabling more individualized attention and greater engagement. Small group instruction fosters active participation, improves comprehension, and supports social-emotional growth. According to the Kennedy School of Education at Harvard University, small group instruction increases problem-solving capacity and builds social and leadership skills. This approach also benefits scholars with disabilities and gifted scholars by providing tailored support and enrichment opportunities. For example, small groups will include targeted instruction in reading comprehension and math fluency, ensuring all scholars progress toward mastery.

Integrated Literacy and IBL. Our instructional model incorporates IBL and PBL to promote critical thinking and problem-solving. In science, scholars will use the 5E instructional model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) and informational texts to develop literacy skills while exploring scientific concepts. Social studies instruction will emphasize Habits of Evidence and Habits of Discussion, enabling scholars to analyze primary sources and engage in meaningful discourse. These interdisciplinary approaches ensure scholars practice literacy skills across all subjects, reinforcing their ability to read, write, speak, and think critically. This integrated model builds the foundational competencies scholars need to succeed in high school and beyond.

Extended Learning Opportunities. To accelerate learning and close achievement gaps, we will provide extended learning time in literacy and math through after-school programs and summer enrichment. These opportunities will offer additional support for struggling scholars and enrichment activities for high-achieving scholars, ensuring every child has the resources needed to succeed.

Professional Development and Instructional Leadership. Effective teaching is central to our academic plan. Using frameworks from Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's Leverage Leadership 2.0 and Doug Lemov's Teach Like a Champion, we will provide ongoing professional development for teachers and school leaders. This training will focus on research-based strategies, including show-call and stamping understanding, which help scholars analyze their mistakes and internalize correct approaches. Annual curriculum audits will ensure our instructional materials remain aligned with Tennessee Academic Standards and responsive to the needs of our scholars. Additionally, regular teacher collaboration sessions will foster a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring all staff members are equipped to deliver high-quality instruction. The core components of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s professional learning and development plan will support effective implementation of our academic plan as seen in Figure 16.

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards
(Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 16 - Core Components of Professional Learning and Development

Core Components of Professional Learning and Development	
Academics	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Assessments Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Rigor Trajectory Practice Clinics Weekly Planning Meetings Weekly Data Meetings Reteach Structures	**Assessments.** Professional learning and development will be provided on how all schoolwide assessments will be delivered throughout the school year. There will be before, during, and after assessments protocols for all teachers, school leaders, and staff members to follow so that our test environments are not compromised by ineffective or immoral practices. Scholars will participate in all school wide assessments in their assigned testing groups, based on any testing accommodations or modifications that must be offered as outlined in scholars' IEP, ILP, and/or 504 Plans. **Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Rigor Trajectory.** Teachers and school leaders will participate in weekly coaching cycles for continuous improvement of their instructional practices in the classroom. Teachers will receive feedback using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for rigor. Teachers will receive live coaching from their instructional coaches (Proposed Executive Director in Year 1). Live coaching is when the instructional coach gives feedback to the teacher to implement in the moment to push instructional practices. This may also include the instructional coach modeling a strategy with scholars during class for the teacher. All teachers will meet 1:1 with their instructional coach each week to discuss observation feedback, practice strategies and upcoming lessons, and check-in on professional development goals. At full scale, the school leadership team will split the coaching load of teachers. Each school leader will be coached by the Proposed Executive Director and will participate in a weekly leadership team meeting to discuss goals for the school and individual leadership goals. **Practice Clinics.** Throughout the school year, teachers and school leaders will engage in regular practice of academic techniques within a defined feedback protocol. Teachers may be expected to deliver portions of an upcoming lesson, receive feedback from their colleagues, and implement the feedback in the moment to improve their practice as follows: (1) Teach a lesson segment with colleagues present. (2) Receive feedback from colleagues. (3) Implement feedback from colleagues. (3) Develop clear next steps to improve future instruction. **Weekly Data Meetings.** Teachers and school leaders will collect and analyze scholar work and assessments to determine next steps for Tiered intervention support in the general education classroom and for MTSS-Academics. **Reteach Structures.** After collecting and analyzing scholars' work and assessments, teachers and school leaders will develop reteaching structures to support scholar learning in the general education classroom, using one of the following structured strategies: Activating Prior Knowledge, Academic Monitoring, Modeling, and/or Guided Discourse.
Special Populations • Scholars with Disabilities • English Learners • Gifted Scholars • Scholars w 504 Plans • Scholars At-Risk	The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will provide professional learning and development support to teachers and school leaders on how to support scholars in our special populations in the general education classroom setting. All scholars have the right to receive an education in the inclusion classroom educators are required to provide the appropriate accommodation modification to support their academic success towards reaching schoolwide goals. **Scholars with Disabilities.** Professional learning and development will consist of reviewing policies and procedural safeguards that support scholars and families; reviewing procedures for identifying a scholar who may qualify for special education services; reviewing the anatomy of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP); reviewing an IEP for a scholar who has been identified; lesson planning with special education teachers to incorporate learning goals, accommodations, and/or modifications as

outlined in the scholars' IEP; participating in mock IEP meetings to understand what happens during the meeting and expected outcomes developed in partnership with families, contracted services providers, and our school; ongoing review of the IEP At-a Glance to ensure institutional delivery is inclusive of goals that support the learning and development of scholars with disabilities; and ongoing support on how to build trusting and lasting relationships and communicate effectively with families who have scholars with disabilities.

ELs. Professional learning and development will consist of reviewing policies that support scholars and families; reviewing procedures for identifying a scholar who may qualify for EL services; reviewing the anatomy of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP); reviewing an ILP for a scholar who has been identified; lesson planning with ESL teachers to incorporate reading, writing, speaking, and listening goals and accommodations and/or modifications as outlined in the scholars' ILP; participating in mock ILP meetings to understand what happens during the meeting and expected outcomes developed in partnership with families, contracted services providers, and our school; ongoing review of the ILP At-a Glance to ensure institutional delivery is inclusive of goals that support the learning and development of ELs; and ongoing support on how to build trusting and lasting relationships and communicate effectively with families who have ELs.

Gifted Scholars. Professional learning and development will consist of reviewing policies and procedural safeguards that support scholars and families; reviewing procedures for identifying a scholar who may qualify for Gifted services; reviewing the anatomy of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP); reviewing an IEP for a scholar who has been identified; lesson planning with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to incorporate learning goals, accommodations, and/or modifications as outlined in the scholars' IEP; participating in mock IEP meetings to understand what happens during the meeting and expected outcomes developed in partnership with families, contracted services providers, and our school; ongoing review of the IEP At-a Glance to ensure institutional delivery is inclusive of goals that support the learning and development of scholars with disabilities; and ongoing support on how to build trusting and lasting relationships and communicate effectively with families who have scholars who are Gifted.

Scholars with 504 Plans. Scholars with Disabilities. Professional learning and development will consist of reviewing policies that support scholars and families; reviewing procedures for identifying a scholar who may qualify for services provided in a 504 Plan; reviewing the anatomy of a 504 Plan; reviewing a 504 Plan for a scholar who has been identified; lesson planning with the School Counselor, also known as the MTSS- Behavior Coordinator, to incorporate learning goals, accommodations, and/or modifications as outlined in the scholars' 504 Plan; participating in mock 504 Plan meetings to understand what happens during the meeting and expected outcomes developed in partnership with families, contracted services providers, and our school; ongoing review of the 504 Plan to ensure institutional delivery is inclusive of goals that support the learning and development of scholars with 504 Plans; and ongoing support on how to build trusting and lasting relationships and communicate effectively with families who have scholars with 504 Plans.

Scholars At-Risk. Professional learning and development will consist of reviewing policies that support scholars and families; reviewing procedures for identifying a scholar who may be identified as At-Risk; reviewing the anatomy of an At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plan; reviewing an At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plan for a scholar who has been identified; lesson planning with the School Counselor to incorporate learning goals, accommodations, and/or modifications as outlined in the scholars' At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plan; participating in mock At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plan meetings to understand what happens during the meeting and expected outcomes developed in partnership with families, contracted services providers, and our school; ongoing review of the At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plan to ensure institutional delivery is inclusive of goals that support the learning and development of scholars with At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plans; and ongoing

	support on how to build trusting and lasting relationships and communicate effectively with families who have scholars with At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plans.

Culture	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Management Trajectory Leading an Student-Centered Culture • Social-Emotional Learning and Support • Character Education • Collaborative Problem-Solving • Emotional Resilience Practice Clinics	**Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Management Trajectory.** Teachers and school leaders will participate in weekly coaching cycles for continuous improvement of their instructional practices in the classroom. Teachers will receive feedback using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for management. Teachers will receive live coaching from their instructional coaches (Proposed Executive Director in Year 1). Live coaching is when the instructional coach gives feedback to the teacher to implement in the moment to push instructional practices. This may also include the instructional coach modeling a strategy with scholars during class for the teacher. All teachers will meet 1:1 with their instructional coach each week to discuss observation feedback, practice strategies and upcoming lessons, and check-in on professional development goals. At full scale, the school leadership team will split the coaching load of teachers. Each school leader will be coached by the Proposed Executive Director and will participate in a weekly leadership team meeting to discuss goals for the school and individual leadership goals. for the school and individual leadership goals. **Leading a Positive School Culture.** To remain proactive and responsive to the needs of our scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members, we will engage in ongoing professional learning and development to ensure our practices are fully aligned to our mission and vision, and to identify best practices and models, inside and outside our school, that demonstrate the school culture we want to reinforce and refine over time. This work will be led by our Proposed Executive Director in partnership with the School Principal, Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, and the MTSS-Behavior Coordinator. **Practice Clinics.** Throughout the school year, teachers and school leaders will engage in regular practice of academic techniques within a defined feedback protocol. Teachers may be expected to deliver portions of an upcoming lesson, receive feedback from their colleagues, and implement the feedback in the moment to improve their practice as follows: (1) Teach a lesson segment with colleagues present. (2) Receive feedback from colleagues. (3) Implement feedback from colleagues. (3) Develop clear next steps to improve future instruction.

Operations	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Schoolwide Systems and Routines	The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will provide ongoing professional learning and development to support our schoolwide operations systems and routines. Our systems and routines will be adaptive over time as our school continues to grow.

Section 1.2e: Outline class sizes and structures for elementary, middle, and high school divisions, and note any significant differences among them.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to fostering a supportive and high-quality learning environment for all scholars. The following outlines our class sizes and instructional structures across three grade bands in grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8.

Grade Bands Brief Overview. Grades K-2 will focus on foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development. We will provide a more intensive focus on early intervention and foundational skill-building in inclusion classrooms. Grades 3-5 focus on building critical thinking and problem-solving skills through interdisciplinary learning. There will also be continued targeted interventions with an increasing focus on academic rigor and independence. Grades 6-8 will focus on rigorous, subject-specific instruction through ABL, IBL, and PBL. There will be an emphasis on transition readiness, including executive functioning skills and preparation for high school expectations.

Class Size and Structure. All grade levels will have 4 cohorts with 24 scholars in each classroom. General education classrooms will have one Licensed Teacher and one Teacher-in-Residence, ensuring a teacher-to-scholar Ratio of 1:12, to

provide personalized attention and support. Inclusion classrooms will have one Licensed Teacher, one Special Education Teacher or ESL Teacher, and one Teacher-in-Residence, ensuring a teacher-to-scholar Ratio of 1:8, to provide personalized attention and support. ELs who receive instruction in the SEI program will have one ESL Teacher and one Teacher-in-Residence, ensuring a teacher-to-scholar ratio of 1:12 (or less scholars), to provide personalized attention and support. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s class sizes and instructional structures are designed to ensure that every scholar receives the individual support they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. By maintaining small teacher-to-scholar ratios and ensuring robust educator support in both general education and inclusion classrooms, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) prioritizes the growth and achievement of all scholars across all grade bands.

Section 1.2f: Provide an overview of the curriculum the school will offer. Detail how the proposed curriculum is well-suited for the targeted scholar population and aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards. Identify any gaps within the curriculum related to Tennessee's Academic Standards and how those gaps will be addressed. *Note: If an authorizer approves a charter application that includes textbooks and instructional materials not approved by the Tennessee State Board of Education pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-2206, the approved application will serve as documentation of the authorizer's decision to waive the sponsor's requirement to use State Board-approved textbooks and instructional materials.*

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to providing a rigorous, mission-aligned curriculum that ensures college and career readiness while meeting the priorities of Rutherford County Schools. The curriculum is meticulously aligned with the Tennessee Academic Standards and TNReady Assessments, with no gaps in standards coverage. Our instructional model is designed to challenge and support all scholars in achieving measurable grade-level proficiency, with a goal of ensuring scholars meet or exceed expectations (Levels 3 and 4) on all grade-level standards.

Curriculum Materials and Alignment. Our approach to curriculum development begins with selecting and strategically sequencing high-quality instructional materials that comprehensively cover all Tennessee Academic Standards. We ensure time is allocated for spiraling content so that scholars not only reach proficiency but sustain it throughout the academic year. To confirm alignment and rigor, we consulted EdReports, a nonprofit organization that evaluates instructional materials for alignment to standards and quality. This extra layer of due diligence ensures that our curriculum meets the highest standards and reflects best practices in curriculum design. We also reviewed the official list of textbook and instructional materials approved by the Tennessee Department of Education. The selected materials also address the diverse needs of the scholar population we will serve.

EdReports emphasizes factors critical to successful curriculum implementation, including:

1. **Awareness:** Increased recognition of high-quality materials.
2. **Policies:** State and district practices that prioritize strong instructional resources.
3. **Selection Processes:** Collaborative, well-researched decision-making that reflects local needs.
4. **Implementation Plans:** Clear metrics to monitor and sustain progress.

By incorporating these principles, Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s curricula are designed to be aligned with Tennessee Academic Standards, recommended by the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission.

Curriculum and Instructional Design. The Proposed Executive Director ensures the curriculum aligns with the Tennessee Academic Standards while prioritizing:

- **Alignment:** Materials meet or exceed the rigor of state standards.
- **Accessibility:** Resources are available and easily implemented.
- **Adjustability:** Curriculum can be adapted to fit our school's unique design, including ABL, IBL, and PBL.

Instructional Model. To maximize scholar outcomes, we will employ a robust instructional model as follows:

- **Two-Educator Classroom Model:** Grades K-8 classrooms feature two educators in the classroom to support direct instruction, small-group learning, independent work, and blended learning.
- **Grade-level Structures.** Grades K-2 will be self-contained; Grades 3-5 will be departmentalized with educator teams teaching English/Language Arts and Social Studies, or Math and Science; and Grades 6-8 will be fully departmentalized. This model reflects an intentional progression of high-quality instruction with academic rigor and specialization as scholars advance through the school.

A Comprehensive Curricula Framework. By selecting high-quality curricula resources recommended by the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission on the Tennessee Department of Education website, we will employ instructional strategies that prioritize excellence, and that will prepare our scholars for academic success and long-term achievement. The alignment to Tennessee Academic Standards also ensures our approach is rigorous and thorough, leaving no gaps in scholar learning. We are committed to creating an educational environment where scholars are challenged, supported, and celebrated as they achieve their fullest potential. To deliver high-quality academic instruction,

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards
(Required for All Sponsors)

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will integrate purchased curricula for all subjects, as outlined in Figure 17. All curricula are or will be fully aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards.

To deliver high-quality academic instruction, Novus SMART Academy (K–8) will implement a carefully selected suite of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials, as outlined in Figure 16. Our curricular selections were made intentionally, grounded in extensive research, a deep understanding of our anticipated student population, and alignment with both Tennessee Academic Standards and our SMART-integrated framework inspired by Harvard University's Project Zero.

English Language Arts. For Grades K–5, we have selected Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) by Amplify, a comprehensive, knowledge-building literacy curriculum that provides systematic foundational skills instruction. According to Amplify, CKLA is grounded in the Science of Reading and uses a two-strand approach, systematic phonics instruction alongside rich content knowledge building, which supports early literacy and reading comprehension development (https://amplify.com/programs/amplify-core-knowledge-language-arts). This approach supports both early reading proficiency and content-area knowledge acquisition, particularly vital for multilingual learners and students with diverse language backgrounds. CKLA is proven to close achievement gaps by emphasizing phonics, vocabulary development, and listening comprehension through stories and texts that are both engaging and complex. For Grades 6–8, we will use myPerspectives by Savvas, a rigorous, student-centered ELA program that fosters critical thinking, discourse, and analysis of complex texts. According to Savvas, myPerspectives supports rigorous ELA instruction through student-centered learning, analysis of complex texts, and performance-based assessments that promote critical thinking and evidence-based writing (https://www.savvas.com/index.cfm?locator=PS2nKv). myPerspectives is especially effective for middle grades because it encourages student voice, collaboration, and evidence-based writing across genres, supporting the academic and socio-emotional growth of adolescents. Its blend of print and digital resources offers flexibility to support differentiated learning and extend the classroom experience.

Mathematics. Across Grades K–8, Novus SMART Academy will implement *enVision Mathematics* by Savvas Learning Company as our core math curriculum. This comprehensive, research-based program is specifically designed to support students in developing a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics, achieving procedural fluency, and applying their knowledge to solve real-world problems (https://www.savvas.com/index.cfm?locator=PS2q47). enVision Mathematics *integrates a blended learning approach that combines print, digital, and hands-on resources to engage all learners. Its instructional design emphasizes the use of visual models, interactive digital tools, and visual learning strategies to help students make sense of abstract mathematical concepts. These tools are especially effective in supporting diverse learners, including English language learners and students with varying levels of prior math achievement.* A key strength of the *enVision* program is its embedded support for differentiation. The curriculum includes built-in opportunities for intervention, on-level instruction, and enrichment, allowing educators to meet students where they are and provide access to high-quality, standards-aligned math content. This adaptive support structure ensures that every student can master grade-level expectations while also fostering a growth mindset and a love of mathematics. By implementing *enVision Mathematics*, Novus SMART Academy will ensure that all students receive a rigorous and supportive math education that builds a strong foundation for future success in advanced mathematics and STEM-related fields.

Science. At Novus SMART Academy, our K–8 science curriculum is intentionally aligned with our SMART-integrated framework, emphasizing inquiry, observation, and reflection, which are core habits of mind cultivated through Project Zero's thinking routines. In Grades K–8, we will adopt *STEMscopes*, an interactive, hands-on curriculum also built on the 5E model. *STEMscopes* emphasizes active exploration, evidence-based reasoning, and engineering design, making it an ideal platform to promote STEM literacy and inquiry-driven learning in the middle grades (https://info.acceleratelearning.com/stemscopes-middle-school). The program includes robust scaffolds to support diverse learners, including English learners and students with disabilities. *STEMscopes* provides a coherent, developmentally appropriate K–8 science experience that prepares students to think critically, ask meaningful questions, and engage deeply with the world around them.

Social Studies. For Grades K-2, we will use Studies Weekly, a core Social Studies curriculum organized thematically to the strands of civics and government, geography, economics, and history (https://www.studiesweekly.com/social-studies/). This curriculum offers a student-friendly periodical format and robust online learning platform that is hands-on and interactive, spiraled and scaffolded, integrated with ELA, research-based, and aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards. For Grades 3–8, we will use Gallopade Tennessee Social Studies, a curriculum fully aligned with the Tennessee Academic Standards and designed specifically for Tennessee classrooms. The curriculum also emphasizes primary source analysis, critical thinking, and civics content designed specifically for Tennessee students (https://www.gallopade.com/Tennessee-c318.aspx). It incorporates diverse perspectives, critical thinking activities, and primary source analysis to help students build historical understanding and civic awareness. Both curricula resources support Project Zero's goals of nurturing ethical, globally minded, and reflective thinkers.

By selecting these high-quality curricula resources, each endorsed by the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission and approved by the Tennessee Department of Education, we are aligning with the Tennessee

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards
(Required for All Sponsors)

Academic Standards and evidence-based instructional practices. Research shows that curriculum choices significantly influence student achievement, particularly when materials are standards-aligned and accessible to diverse learners (*Steiner, D. (2017).* Curriculum Research: What We Know and Where We Need to Go. *StandardsWork.; TNTP. (2018).* The Opportunity Myth: What Students Can Show Us About How School Is Letting Them Down—and How to Fix It.). These state-approved resources are designed to promote depth of knowledge, critical thinking, and academic discourse, ensuring excellence across all core content areas.

In addition to their academic rigor, these curricula are intentionally structured with embedded scaffolds, formative assessments, and strategies to engage all learners, including multilingual students and those requiring additional support (*Council of the Great City Schools. (2021).* Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures.). This ensures equitable access to grade-level content and promotes higher-order thinking for all students. Furthermore, each curriculum integrates seamlessly into our SMART-integrated instructional framework, rooted in the principles of Harvard University's Project Zero. Project Zero's "Visible Thinking" approach is supported by extensive research showing its effectiveness in improving student engagement, metacognition, and cross-disciplinary understanding (Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Making Thinking Visible: How to Promote Engagement, Understanding, and Independence for All Learners*. Jossey-Bass.). The framework cultivates habits of mind such as curiosity, reflection, and collaboration; connects learning to real-world contexts; and helps students construct meaning across disciplines, essential for 21st-century learners.

Our instructional approach is both academically rigorous and deeply human-centered. We are committed to creating an educational environment where scholars are challenged intellectually, supported emotionally, and celebrated for their growth and achievement. Through this thoughtful curriculum integration, Novus SMART Academy will prepare scholars not only for academic success, but also for long-term leadership, innovation, and lifelong learning.

Figure 17 - Proposed Curricula Choices

Grades	Literacy	Math	Science	Social Studies
K-2	**CKLA Amplify** **Skills Strand Lessons:** All Skills lessons include some or all the following segments: • Foundational Skills • Language • Reading • Writing • Speaking and Listening (integrated into other segments) **Knowledge Strand Lessons:** All Knowledge lessons follow the same structure as follows: • Core Connections (lesson 1 only) • Introducing the Read Aloud • Presenting the Read Aloud • Application **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Language Arts and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**enVision Mathematics** • Fluency • Procedural, Conceptual, and Application Math Skills **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Math and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**STEMscopes Science Curriculum** **Coverage of grade-level science standards within the 5E + IA framework as follows:** • Engage • Explore • Explain • Elaborate • Evaluate • Intervention • Acceleration **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Science	**Studies Weekly Social Studies Curriculum** **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Social Studies
3-5	**CKLA Amplify** **Skills and Knowledge Strands Integration:** Each unit is organized around a central	**enVision Mathematics** • Fluency • Procedural, Conceptual, and	**STEMscopes Science Curriculum** **Coverage of grade-level science standards**	**Gallopade Curriculum** **Blended Learning**

	anchor text. All grades 3-5 lessons include some or all the following segments: • Core Connections (lesson 1 only) • Reading • Writing • Language • Speaking and Listening (grades 4-5 only) **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Language Arts and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	Application Math Skills **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Math and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**within the 5E + IA framework as follows:** • Engage • Explore • Explain • Elaborate • Evaluate • Intervention • Acceleration **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Science	**Program:** IXL Social Studies
6-7	***myPerspectives* Reading Workshop** • Whole Class Learning • Small Group Learning • Independent Learning ***MyPerspectives* Writing Workshop** • Mini Lesson • Independent Writing • Writing Reflection **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Language Arts and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**enVision Mathematics** • Fluency • Procedural, Conceptual, and Application Math Skills **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Math and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**STEMscopes Science Curriculum** **Coverage of grade-level science standards within the 5E + IA framework as follows:** • Engage • Explore • Explain • Elaborate • Evaluate • Intervention • Acceleration **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Science	**Gallopade Curriculum** **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Social Studies
8	***myPerspectives* Reading Workshop** • Whole Class Learning • Small Group Learning • Independent Learning ***MyPerspectives* Writing Workshop** • Mini Lesson • Independent Writing • Writing Reflection **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Language Arts and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**enVision Mathematics** • Fluency • Procedural, Conceptual, and Application Math Skills **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Math and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only. **enVision Integrated Mathematics (eligible scholars only)** • Fluency • Procedural, Conceptual, and Application Math Skills **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Math and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only.	**STEMscopes Science Curriculum** **Coverage of grade-level science standards within the 5E + IA framework as follows:** • Engage • Explore • Explain • Elaborate • Evaluate • Intervention • Acceleration **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Science	**Gallopade Curriculum** **Blended Learning Program:** IXL Social Studies

Section 1.2 – Academic Focus and Performance Standards
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.2g: Outline the school's strategies to address academic underperformance. Include plans for Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) that align with Tennessee guidelines pursuant to SBE Rule 0520-01-03-.03.

To remediate academic underperformance and address learning loss, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will employ a comprehensive instructional model that prioritizes small group instruction and blended learning in literacy and mathematics. Scholars in grades K-8 will engage in teacher-led groups and adaptive, computer-based programming tailored to their individual needs. Scholars in our special populations will also receive additional layers of differentiated support, guided reading, and targeted interventions aligned with IEPs, ILPS, and or 504 Plans. We will also embed Character Education to foster social-emotional intelligence to reinforce a positive school culture.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) Framework. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s RTI² framework aligns with Tennessee Department of Education guidelines to accelerate scholar growth through targeted support. This multi-tiered system identifies, monitors, and addresses academic challenges, ensuring timely intervention and progress monitoring.

Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring. Scholars will be assessed three times annually using NWEA MAP[82] (Fall, Winter, Spring) and FastBridge as the universal screener and progress monitoring tool for Reading and Math. FastBridge[83] benchmark data will be reviewed within one week of administration, and scholars scoring at/below the 24th percentile will receive additional diagnostic assessments to determine their instructional level for targeted interventions. We will administer biweekly progress monitoring using research-based curricula for scholars in Tier II, and weekly progress monitoring to provide data-driven insights into intervention efficacy for scholars in Tier III.

RTI²-Academics Team. In Year 1, our MTSS-Academics team will include the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, Licensed Teachers, a School Psychologist (contracted services through Project Play Therapy), Special Education Teachers, and ESL Teachers. This team will meet biweekly to analyze data, measure intervention effectiveness, and monitor scholar progress. Summative reviews occur at the end of each learning cycle to make data-driven instructional decisions.

Tiered Interventions

- **Tier I:** High-quality instruction aligned with state standards for all scholars.
- **Tier II:** Small group interventions targeting specific skill deficits identified through progress monitoring.
- **Tier III:** Intensive, individualized interventions addressing significant learning gaps or persistent underperformance.

Intervention Curricula and Tools

- **Grades K-5:** Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum for foundational literacy skills, including phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and reading comprehension[84].
- **Grades 6-8:** Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180, a structured program integrating science-based reading strategies and scaffolded support for independent reading[85].
- **Blended Learning Tools:**
    - **IXL:** Adaptive platform supporting literacy and math through conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and contextual application.
    - **Imagine MyPath:** Personalized pathways for foundational skill development in reading and math, with targeted scaffolding for scholars performing two or more grade levels below expectations.

IXL and the Science of Reading. IXL's ELA curriculum is designed using research-based best practices for effective early literacy instruction[86]. Scholars will be supported with instant feedback, video tutorials, and professionally recorded audio as they build knowledge and fluency at their own pace using the fundamental components of reading as follows:

- Phonological and Phonemic Awareness: IXL's foundational reading skills teach scholars how to identify rhymes and syllables as well as how to recognize, segment, blend, and manipulate sounds in words. The video tutorials use multisensory instruction to help scholars understand how words are made up of parts, and teachers show scholars how to feel what their mouths are doing to help them identify sounds. Scholars can then work through problems independently, using IXL's professionally recorded audio, which allows them to hear the words and sounds they are asked to identify.
- Systematic and Structured Phonics Instruction: IXL's phonics skills follow a logical sequence from simple to more complex, allowing scholars to work through concepts in a systematic way. These skills cover everything from consonant sounds and short vowels to more advanced concepts like diphthongs, R-controlled vowels, and multisyllabic words. IXL's video tutorials provide explicit instruction on all phonics concepts in an appropriate, engaging, and supportive way.
- Comprehension: IXL also gives scholars the opportunity to engage with high-quality, complex texts to build content knowledge and reading comprehension strategies. The skills feature literary and informational passages in a variety of genres and topics to spark scholars' curiosity and cultivate their love of reading. These skills include

audio and image support. In grade K-2, read-along audio support highlights each word as it is being read so scholars can follow along with the text as a professional voice artist models fluent reading.

- Fluency: Through a variety of "read-alone" skills, featuring simple literary and informational texts, beginning readers can practice reading independently to build fluency. These texts offer audio support for the instructions, questions, and answers, but not for the main texts. The sight word skills teach scholars to recognize high-frequency words quickly and effortlessly. The accompanying video tutorials explicitly teach scholars how to decode each word.
- Vocabulary: IXL's vocabulary skills teach scholars key word-learning strategies, like using word parts or context clues to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words, that help them build grade-appropriate vocabulary and bolster their reading comprehension.

IXL and Math. To build lasting knowledge, scholars need to attain conceptual understanding first, going beyond simply discerning math facts to understanding why and how math works. IXL skills focus on conceptual understanding illuminating why certain methods work, giving scholars the ability to apply concepts and explain their reasoning later[87]. From there, procedural fluency leverages deep conceptual understanding to build facility with facts and procedures, and contextual application encourages scholars to create strategies for solving complex problems in multiple contexts. IXL offers a wide range of skills supporting all these aspects so scholars progress seamlessly and achieve rigor in math as follows:

- Conceptual Understanding: To develop conceptual knowledge of topics, such as subtraction and fractions, scholars practice IXL skills involving area models, linked cubes, number lines, ten frames, and many other models. Each question adjusts in difficulty based on the scholar's level of understanding, so learners always work on questions perfectly suited for them. Scholars also receive immediate feedback when they answer a question incorrectly, ensuring they gain in-depth understanding of foundational pieces of each topic before moving on.
- Procedural Fluency: Scholars need ample opportunity to practice procedural skills to achieve fluency, but if teachers cannot match scholars to skills that fit their knowledge levels, practice can start to feel a lot like "drill and kill" work. IXL goes beyond rote skill practice by offering built-in differentiation. IXL skills are scaffolded so that scholars effectively build knowledge from easier to more complex concepts. Questions are adaptive, ensuring that scholars are always working at the correct difficulty level and on the right concept. And if scholars need support, IXL offers in-skill recommendations where scholars can pause and build up additional foundational knowledge.
- Contextual Application: Scholars will tie together all the strategies they have learned while practicing contextual application skills. For example, IXL's word problems combine multi-step questions with real-world examples. In addition, IXL checkpoint skills help scholars strategically apply multiple concepts when working through rigorous questions, ultimately preparing them for higher achievement on standardized assessments. If scholars demonstrate gaps in knowledge, IXL provides learners the exact foundational skills that will close them.

With a strong balance of conceptual, procedural, and application skills, IXL's comprehensive math curriculum ensures teachers have important resources to help scholars build a deep understanding of concepts.

Imagine MyPath and the Science of Reading. Like IXL for English/language arts, Imagine MyPath gradually increases text complexity to move scholars into grade-level reading. The platform also uses direct instruction videos to model metacognitive reading strategies in over 60 scholar-friendly languages. Scholars performing two or more grade levels below their current grade level receive age-appropriate instruction in phonics, fluency, and vocabulary development, which is the core foundation of science of reading research[88].

Imagine MyPath and Math. Like IXL for math, Imagine MyPath prepares scholars for high-level problem solving by strengthening their foundational skills and conceptual understanding. The platform also efficiently scaffolds scholars up to grade level by prioritizing domain-specific critical skills based on each scholar's data[89].

MTSS-Academics Curriculum. For grades K-5, we will use the Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum that integrates research around personalized best practices and instructional strategies based on the science of reading using authentic to focus on letter recognition, letter sounds, phonological awareness, decoding skills, vowel team, blends and digraph recognition, word reading fluency, writing and expression, reading fluency and accuracy applying decoding skills[90]. This curriculum is in alignment with the deficit areas being progress monitored through FastBridge.

For grades 6-8, we will use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180 curriculum that integrates research around personalized best practices, adaptive technology, instructional strategies based on the science of reading, and scaffolded support for reading independently. Our scholars will receive systematic, direct instruction and practice their foundational literacy skills to develop their fluency, expand vocabulary and strengthen comprehension skills to become proficient, skillful readers[91]. This curriculum is in alignment with the deficit areas being progress monitored through FastBridge.

Progress Monitoring and Addressing Scholar Deficits. Effective progress monitoring requires different tools than those used for universal screening. While computer adaptive tests (**CATs**) are ideal for screening due to their ability to measure broad skills, progress monitoring measures must be highly sensitive to small amounts of growth and be able to reliably

measure that growth quickly. FastBridge only uses curriculum-based measures (CBMs) for progress monitoring[92]. We will use FastBridge as follows:

- Weekly or biweekly assessment of specific skills.
- 1:1 administration to observe scholar performance with at least 18 data points over 9 weeks.
- Up to 5 minutes per scholar to complete.

MTSS-Academics Instructional Minutes

- Base Tier II Requirements for Instruction
  - 30 minutes of instruction 3 times per week in grades K-5 with a 1:3 ratio.
  - 30 minutes of instruction 3 times per week in grades 6-8 with a 1:4 ratio.
- Base Tier III Requirements for Instruction
  - At least 40 minutes of instruction daily in grades K-5 with a 1:3 ratio.
  - At least 45 minutes of instruction daily in grades 6-8 with a 1:4 ratio. We will also provide blended learning intervention during the Literacy block (30 minutes) and Math block (30 minutes) on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, which will exceed the number of required minutes for MTSS-Academics instruction.
- We will provide 60 minutes of instruction 4 times per week during our MTSS-Academics block at the beginning of the day on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays (blended learning intervention during 1:1 progress monitoring), and Thursdays for Tier II and Tier III. We will also provide blended learning intervention during the Literacy block (30 minutes) and Math block (30 minutes) on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, which will exceed the number of required minutes for MTSS-Academics instruction (see Figure 18 for weekly schedule).

Figure 18 - Weekly RT2-Academics Schedule

Weekday	Grades K-8
Monday	Direct Instruction (60 minutes)
Tuesday	Direct Instruction (60 minutes)
Wednesday	• 60 minutes • Blended Learning Intervention on IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only. • 1:1 Progress Monitoring using FastBridge **Please Note:** After the teacher completes 1:1 progress monitoring for each scholar, the teacher will have the autonomy to begin a new lesson for direct instruction should time permit. Otherwise, blended learning intervention on IXL and/or Imagine MyPath for EL scholars only will count as individualized direct instruction for scholars on Wednesdays.
Thursday	Direct Instruction (60 minutes)

Rate of Improvement (ROI) Analysis. Teachers will calculate the ROI by dividing the total units gained by weeks of intervention, comparing the scholar's progress against typical peer growth. This data informs decisions about intervention adjustments or special education referrals.

Decision-Making and Data Analysis. The RTI²-Academics team will evaluate multiple data sources, including benchmark and interim assessments, progress monitoring results, teacher and parent input, and classroom assessments and work samples. Decisions will include increasing intervention frequency or intensity, adjusting intervention strategies or groups, modifying the time of intervention delivery, and/or referring for special education evaluation if inadequate progress is observed.

Staff Training and Development. All instructional staff will receive ongoing professional learning and development beginning in the summer to include foundational training on RTI² diagnostic tools, universal screeners, and small group instruction. During our professional learning and development on early release Wednesdays, we will dedicate time for professional learning, data-driven instruction, and group leveling to address scholar needs.
Ongoing support will be provided observations and fidelity checks to ensure effective implementation.

Parent Communication and Documentation. We will regularly update parents/guardians on scholar progress by providing copies of scholars plans and progress reports that will also be included in their formal academic files. Through structured routines and high expectations for all scholars, Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s RTI² framework ensures personalized and effective interventions to close achievement gaps and support every scholar's academic success.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.3a: Detail formative and/or summative assessments the school will utilize to determine the academic needs of individual students and student sub-groups. Explain how these assessments align with the school's academic plan and state standards. Detail the frequency and cadence of these assessments and identify the faculty and staff responsible for administering them.

At Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we believe the purpose of assessments is to gain insight into scholars' understanding. As we collect and analyze data from assessments to determine our scholars' level of performance using our teaching practices, we hold ourselves accountable for achieving a critical part of our mission: providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning. Quality assessments should make scholars' thinking visible and require responses and actions from both teachers and scholars.

In partnership with LEAD Public Schools' philosophy for assessments, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) defines assessment in three ways: *of, for,* or *as* learning. A key to quality assessments is that scholars are users of their own assessments data. We ensure scholars understand the purpose of every assessment they take. Effective teachers and school leaders communicate the purpose and outcomes of assessments to scholars so that they can maintain an active role in their own academic progress. Another aspect of quality assessments is analysis and use of data to improve instruction. We believe that an assessment should only be administered if the data will be useful in improving instruction for scholars. Every assessment we administer will have a data analysis and action component. Below, we outline our assessments strategy categorized by assessment types, grade levels, assessment frequency, and the assessment purpose for or of learning to describe scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members' roles and how we use assessments data to impact instruction.

Assessment *as* Learning. A critical component to effective assessments is the involvement of scholars. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) emphasizes the use of assessments as learning. We define these assessments as opportunities for scholars to evaluate the quality of their work, set, and review individual learning goals, and build awareness of metacognitive strategies. During these assessments, the teacher's role is to facilitate feedback with academic monitoring, and to guide scholars in the development of academic goals. The internal assessments that we propose to use as assessments of individual scholars and subgroups will align with our school curriculum, the performance and accountability goals described in Section 1.1b of this charter school application, and the Tennessee Academic Standards, as listed in Figure 19 on the next page.

Figure 19 - Types of Assessments

Assessment Type	Grade Levels	Frequency	Assessment Purpose
NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading, Language, Math, & Science	K-8	3 Testing Sessions August December May	**What:** Assessment ***FOR*** Learning: This formative assessment is used to help gain insight into scholar achievement, to diagnose and respond to scholar needs, and to help identify progress over time. **Why:** NWEA MAP serves a twofold purpose: • Serves as the universal screener to support Response to Instruction and Intervention-Academics (MTSS-Academics) and tiered instruction. • Serves as a personalized and adaptive assessment that tracks scholar growth and gives teachers essential information about what each scholar knows and is ready to learn for differentiated instruction. NWEA MAP enables teachers to compare their scholars' skill level and growth relative to peers around the country. It is a nationally normed and adaptive set of tests that measures various skills in reading and mathematics, increasing or decreasing in complexity as the scholar answers each question. Furthermore, NWEA MAP offers scholar-level growth goals and projections based on national norms. In addition, rigorous studies have found associations between NWEA MAP performance and future ACT performance, making MAP a relevant part of preparing scholars for college. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners, should participate in NWEA MAP unless it is deemed extremely inappropriate for a scholar. The decision to make this accommodation should be made by the

			IEP team, and a statement regarding off-grade testing for NWEA MAP should be included in the scholar's IEP. **Data:** We will use the NWEA MAP Student Progress Report data to determine each scholar's RIT level. We will use the Learning Continuum Report to provide individual support for skill gaps and to differentiate blended learning during Tier I instruction. Data will inform scholars' national ranking, part of our school's accountability plan.
FastBridge **MTSS-Academics** **MTSS-Behavior**	Grades K-8	**Tier I** August December May **Tier II** Biweekly **Tier III** Weekly	**What:** Assessment ***FOR*** Learning: This formative assessment tool helps teachers deeply understand where scholars are in their academic learning and social-emotional behavior (SEB) needs. **Why:** FastBridge serves a twofold purpose: • **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Management:** Universal screening, progress monitoring, and survey level assessments for academics and SEB, combined with whole child data visualizations and built-in tools for key MTSS practices. • **Disproportionality:** Data and tools to monitor for disproportionality in daily practices and outcomes, track progress in real time, and drive action and change. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners, should participate in FastBridge. **Data:** We will use FastBridge data to determine priority placement and support of scholars who receive Tier II and Tier III MTSS support in academics and behaviors. We will store this data in scholars files and conduct data meetings on Wednesdays during our early release time for scholars and families.
Progress Learning Interim Assessments for ELA, Math, Science, & Social Studies	Grades K-8	3 Testing Sessions September December March	**What:** Assessment ***FOR*** Learning: Progress Learning is a competency-based learning platform that helps teachers identify levels of understanding, target scholars for intervention, and inform instruction. This formative assessment tool is used to help gain insight into scholar achievement, to diagnose and respond to scholar needs and to help families identify progress over time. This means teachers have more time to teach and scholars have more time to learn. **Why:** Interim assessments deliver a road map for both teachers and scholars and set the tone for the level of rigor at which standards are taught. They are the true hub of a data-driven school (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010). Furthermore, formative assessment is one of the most effective strategies for improving scholar learning (William and Black, 1998). Effective assessment *for* and *as* learning requires a great deal of time to be spent analyzing scholar work, providing feedback to move scholars forward, and adjusting instruction to meet scholar needs. Interim assessments provide data on scholars' mastery of high-leverage content standards. Such standards comprise a subset of the standards that state tests assess each year. We use our interim assessments as more than a means of comparison and measuring progress. We use our interim assessments to provide exemplary tasks that represent the rigor of the Tennessee Academic Standards and a common platform

			to develop teachers in their understanding of the standards, formative assessment and measuring and tracking scholar mastery. The purpose of our interim assessments are to… • Norm on task and performance levels and mastery of focus standards. • Allow scholars to experience tasks that mirror the rigor of Tennessee Academic Standards. • Provide teachers and instructional leaders with baseline and progressive scholar performance and insight into scholar understanding. • Set guideposts as to how scholars grapple with and express their understanding of the Tennessee Academic Standards. • Provide a common vehicle for developing teachers' skills at analyzing scholar work and using that analysis to inform instruction. • Use immediate assessment data to improve scholar outcomes. Not after year-end summative tests, but while there's still time to refocus. • Clearly see which standards need reteaching, which scholars need remediation, and how other teachers are helping scholars conquer the world. **Who:** All scholars at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in any grade or content area that takes a TNReady assessment, including Scholars with Disabilities scholars and English Language Learners. **Data:** We will use Progress Learning data to review scholars' performance by cohort and individual score reports to determine strengths, opportunities and trends as we set instructional priorities for our next phase of work. We will follow a data protocol, analyzing data on a designated data day.
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	Grades 4 & 8	Winter	**What:** Assessment **OF** Learning: Known as the nation's report card, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing summative assessment of what America's scholars know and can do in various subject areas. Assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, U.S. history, and in Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL). **Why:** NAEP provides a common yardstick for rigorously measuring scholar achievement across the nation and over time. The assessment stays essentially the same from year to year, with only carefully documented changes. **Who:** For the national assessments, probability samples of schools and scholars are selected to represent the diverse scholar population in the United States. In state assessments (mathematics, reading, science, and writing), a sample of schools and scholars is selected to represent each participating state. **Data:** We will use NAEP data to monitor our scholars' educational progress in our community in comparison to the performance of other scholars in other regions of the United States..

Section 1.3 – Assessments (Required for All Sponsors)			
			Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NAEP Overview and How Schools and Scholars Are Selected).
ACCESS for ELLs (ELA21)	Grades K-8	Spring	**What:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose is to measure and report on individual scholar learning outcomes. The Novus SMART Academy team will collaborate to analyze summative assessment results and use these data for programmatic decision-making on a year-to-year basis. **Why:** ACCESS results help guide decisions regarding English Language Learners' (ELLs) participation in content area classrooms without program support and state academic content assessments without accommodations. Scores can be used to determine the preliminary placement of ELLs and if an ELL can be reclassified from ELL status to Transition 1 status. ACCESS can also help schools and districts evaluate the effectiveness of ELL programs. **Who:** All scholars with limited English proficiency (LEP) except those who have exited English Language Learner (ELL) services. This includes waived/opt out of ELL services scholars who have not tested out yet. **Data:** We will use ELPA21 data to determine ELL services with the consent of families.
MSAA for Scholars with Disabilities (ELA and Math) **TCAP-Alt for Scholars with Disabilities (Science and Social Studies)**	Grades 3-8 for MSAA. Grades 3-8 for TCAP-Alt.	Spring	**What:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose is to measure and report on individual scholar learning outcomes. We collaborate to analyze summative assessment results and use these data for programmatic decision-making on a year-to-year basis. **Why & Who:** The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) is the English Language Arts and Math assessment for scholars in grades 3–8 and grade 11 with the most significant cognitive disabilities. MSAA is administered online by the teacher. TCAP-Alt is the assessment for Science and Social Studies for scholars with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Scholars are assessed in grades 3–8 for both science and social studies and in grade 10 for Biology. TCAP-Alt is administered via paper by the teacher. The structures of alternate assessments are designed around the scholars' physical and cognitive disabilities in a way that allows them to answer test questions and participate in the test as independently as possible. The alternate assessments were designed by teachers and professions most familiar with scholars with significant cognitive disabilities. A variety of accommodations are built in the test design and designed to accommodate each scholar's personal mode of communication (sign language, eye gaze, augmentative communication devices, etc.). **Data:** We will use MSAA and TCAP-Alt data to plan curricular priorities and prescribed learning paths for the upcoming school year.
TNReady State Testing	Grades 3-8 and Integrated	Spring	**What:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose is to measure and report on individual scholar learning outcomes. We

Section 1.3 – Assessments (Required for All Sponsors)			
ELA **Math** **Science** **Social Studies** **Tennessee Department of Education Blueprints for 2023-2024**	Math I for eligible scholars in Grade 8.		collaborate to analyze summative assessment results and use these data for programmatic decision-making on a year-to-year basis. **Why:** TNReady is part of the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement Program that measures scholar learning and growth every academic school year towards mastery of Tennessee Academic Standards. TNReady tests in the areas of ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The assessments include rigorous questions that assess scholars' writing, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. It is designed to assess true scholar understanding, not just basic memorization and test-taking skills. Tennessee law requires participation for grades 3-8 in achievement tests intended to measure progress over one year in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies, and in English I & II, Integrated Math I, II, & III, Biology, and U.S. History/Geography in high school courses. Federal and state policies do not allow for families or scholars to opt-out from state assessments, regardless of the reason. **For Teachers, more information can be found on the state testing website.** For teachers of tested subjects, TNReady scores factor into the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) score. **For Families, more information can be found on the state testing website.** Your scholar's TNReady scores will determine whether they earn the credit for that course and will be factored into their final grade for that course based on a percentage set by the State Legislature on an annual basis. **For Scholars:** Scholar's TNReady scores will determine whether they earn the credit for that course and will be factored into their final grade for that course based on a percentage set by the State Legislature on an annual basis. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners that are not taking the TCAP Alternate Assessments or the ELPA21 Summative Assessment must take the TNReady state mandated assessments. **Data:** We will use TNReady and Integrated Math I EOC data to plan curricular priorities for upcoming year and cohorts. For Integrated Math I, data will show if scholars demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations for success in high school math.
Unit Assessments	Grades K-8	Mid-Unit & End-of-Unit	**What & Why:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose of unit summative assessments is to measure our scholars' progress towards mastery of the standards covered in a unit of study. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners. **Data:** We will unit assessment data to inform instruction for enrichment and/or intervention. The Proposed Executive Director- and the School Principal as hired- will facilitate the Looking at Student Work Protocol with teachers to analyze scholars' work for misconceptions and to plan for upcoming

Section 1.3 – Assessments (Required for All Sponsors)			
			lessons with small group instruction and remediation tasks embedded.
Weekly Assessments	Grades K-8	Tuesdays thru Fridays	**What & Why:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose of weekly formative assessments is to measure performance and progress towards our academic goals weekly. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners. **Data:** We will use weekly assessments data to review weekly performance towards mastery of standards. Scholars and families will receive a summary of weekly academic progress in their weekly folders and PowerSchool reports.
Daily Assessments	Grades K-8	Tuesdays thru Fridays	**What & Why:** Assessment **OF** Learning: The purpose of daily formative assessments, such as a No Now or Exit Ticket, is to track performance and progress towards our academic goals daily and to assess instructional quality and effectiveness. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners. **Data:** We will use daily assessments data to look at student work, to monitor the quality of instruction and adjust, to determine mastery of standards and lesson objectives, and to determine targeted supports for scholars where needed.
ACT Aspire	Grade 8	Spring	**What & Why:** Assessment **FOR** Learning: The purpose of ACT Aspire summative assessment is to gauge how scholars are predicted to perform on college entrance exams in grade 8. **Who:** All scholars, including scholars with disabilities and English language learners, in grade 8. **Data:** We will use ACT Aspire data to help with our scholars' transition to our soon-to-be Novus SMART Collegiate (9-12) high school and which classes they need to be placed in to support their prescribed learning paths.

Universal Reading Screener. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will also use FastBridge as our universal reading screener. This screener assesses scholars in the following reading areas: letter names, letter sounds, phonemic segmenting, comprehension, word reading fluency, and passage reading fluency. FastBridge also serves a twofold purpose:

- **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Management:** Universal screening and progress monitoring assessments for academics and social-emotional behaviors, combined with whole scholar data visualizations and built-in tools for key MTSS practices.
- **Disproportionality:** Data and tools to monitor for disproportionality in daily practices and outcomes, track progress in real time, and drive action and change.

In alignment with Tennessee Department of Education's MTSS Framework, we will also administer the NWEA MAP to all scholars in Grades K-8 three times per year (Fall, Winter, and Spring). We will use a triangulation of data to determine tier groups for MTSS placement and use NWEA and FastBridge data to compare data for placement of our scholars in the MTSS model in academics and behavior. We will review the NWEA MAP benchmark data within one week of administration, and scholars performing at or below the 24th percentile in one or more areas will receive further assessment with FastBridge so that we can determine scholar placement into tiers for instruction and intervention.

Dyslexia Screening Process

- **Step 1.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will administer NWEA, a nationally normed assessment, as a part of the universal screening process three times a year. In addition, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will administer FastBridge to further triangulate data and determine scholar deficiencies and areas of focus for intervention. The assessment areas will also include assessment of basic reading, reading fluency, and written expression.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Step 2.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s MTSS-Academics team will consider the results of the NWEA skills-based universal screener in comparison to FastBridge, other classroom-based assessments, teacher observations, grades, formative assessments, summative assessments, and other relevant family medical history or information. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will consider any additional requests for screenings.
- **Step 3.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s MTSS-Academics team will identify "at risk" scholars based on the multiple sources of data, survey level and/or diagnostic assessments to determine scholar intervention needs. The assessments will measure phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding skills, rapid naming, and encoding skills.
- **Steps 4-5.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s MTSS-Academics team will make decisions about interventions, accommodations, etc. Parental notifications will be made after the screening process, and the intervention plan with tiered instruction will be implemented based on scholar deficit areas associated with the characteristics of dyslexia.

Assessment Strategy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will rely heavily on this Assessment Strategy to communicate information and expectations regarding every assessment that our schools touch, as well as each assessment's connection to our Core Values that are aligned to student achievement and growth:

- **Academic Excellence**: We believe our scholars and families deserve access to a high-quality academic educational experience that fosters a relentless drive for academic success, innovation, and personal growth.
- **Intellectual Curiosity**: We believe in fostering rigorous learning experiences between our teachers and scholars as they question, discover, and pursue knowledge relentlessly with high-quality academic curricula.

These assessments will provide our teachers, school leaders, and Board of Directors with feedback on our scholars' present level of performance and progress toward Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of grade-level standards and selected curricular tasks. They will offer a holistic perspective of our scholars' progress in comparison to their peers across the district and state and supply information about our scholars' academic strengths, opportunities for growth, common trends, and areas to support moving forward. Assessments will gauge scholars' readiness for their college and career paths based on their Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) of Tennessee Academic Standards and alert teachers and school leaders to areas to strengthen during instructional delivery, curricula choices, and professional learning and development. Finally, the results will guide school leaders and the Board of Directors in the allocation of academic resources and the need for professional learning and development for teachers and staff.

Assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and state standards. The assessments that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use to assess scholars' present level of performance align with our curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

Curriculum and State Standards. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes a curriculum that fully aligns to Tennessee Academic Standards. Referring to data from EdReports regarding ways to increase the use of rigorous curricula, we chose resources that contain mid-unit and end-of-unit assessments that align to Tennessee Academic Standards[78]. We ensured the question types also align to what scholars will see on the NWEA MAP benchmark assessments, FastBridge assessments for progress monitoring in academics, Progress Learning interim assessments, and TNReady state assessments.

Performance Goals. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes ambitious performance goals that are absolute, comparative, and longitudinal measures of success and aligned to Rutherford County Schools' strategic plans, Tennessee Academic Standards, and Every Scholar Succeeds Act (ESSA) as follows.

Goal 1: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in English/Language Arts.

- Absolute Measure 1.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will read on or above grade level after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will read on or above grade level in the performance category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
- Comparative Measure 1.3: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

- Growth Measure 1.4: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the Reading Comprehension section of the NWEA MAP assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 2: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Math.

- Absolute Measure 2.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in math in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. The proficiency rate of scholars in Grade 8 taking the Grade 8 TNReady math assessment or eligible scholars taking the Integrated Math I EOC assessment will meet or exceed the proficiency rate of the highest-performing district in Tennessee up to 85%.
- Comparative Measure 2.2: All scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 2.3: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the mathematics section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 3: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Science.

- Absolute Measure 3.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in science with the reporting category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. Our scholars in Grade 8 who have attended for at least for 5 consecutive years will, on average, attain a score on the science section of the ACT Aspire in the 70th percentile or greater.
- Comparative Measure 3.2: In each testing year, scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee. Scholars who have attended for 7 or more consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that equals or exceeds the top 10% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 3.3: In each testing year, overall performance in science, as measured by the TNReady, will, on average, demonstrate growth in proficiency in each tested year equal to or greater than that of similar schools. In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the science section of the NWEA MAP will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 4: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Social Studies.

- Absolute Measure 4.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady. At least 60% will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of all scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will meet or exceed grade-level performance in social studies in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on TNReady.
- Comparative Measure 4.2: Scholars who have attended for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average on the TNReady Assessment. Scholars who have attended for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate that meets or exceeds the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) at a rate in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 4.3: Overall performance in social studies, as measured by the TNReady, will, on average, demonstrate growth in proficiency equal to or greater than that of similar schools.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

Goal 5: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Art.

- Absolute Measure 5.1: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will demonstrate proficiency in artistic skills and concepts, as measured by a portfolio assessment scoring in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) using the rubric. At least 60% will achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on the rubric.
- Comparative Measure 2.3: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) ratings on portfolio assessments at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve at a rate that Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) above the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will achieve portfolio assessment scores in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 2.5: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the portfolio-based art assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 6: Scholars will demonstrate Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance in Technology

- Absolute Measure 2.2: At least 50% of all scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will demonstrate proficiency in digital literacy and coding fundamentals in the category of Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4), as measured by their performance on a technology rubric. At least 60% will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) after 4 consecutive years. At least 80% of scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will demonstrate Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) on the rubric.
- Comparative Measure 2.4: Scholars who have attended Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for 3 consecutive years will, on average, achieve Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) ratings on a technology rubric at a rate of at least 10 percentage points higher than the district average. Scholars who attend for 4 consecutive years will, on average, achieve at a rate that Met Expectations (Level 3) or Exceeded Expectations (Level 4) above the state average. Scholars who have attended for 5 consecutive years will achieve technology rubric scores in the top 25% of schools in Tennessee.
- Growth Measure 2.6: Technology In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual percentile increases among Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars on the technology assessment will average a minimum of five percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 7: The school will maintain good standing under the Tennessee ESSA accountability guidelines and system.

- Measure 5.1: Under the Tennessee ESSA accountability system, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain consistent good standing. The state will never identify the school as a Priority School or determine that it has met the criteria to be identified as a school at risk for closure based on inadequate academic progress or achievement. We will be in good standing with performance for all scholars, regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

Building Test Coordinator. In Year 1, the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will function as the Building Test Coordinator for all state and national with support from the Office Manager, School Counselor as the MTSS-Behavior Coordinator, and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access as the MTSS-Academics Coordinator. At full scale, the MTSS-Academics Coordinator, also known as the Data and Assessments Coordinator will function as the Building Test Coordinator for all state and national with support from grade-band School Counselors, Instructional Coaches, and the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access. The Building Test Coordinator will report to the Proposed Executive Director, Dr. Jeremy Sager, who has more than 5 years of experience as a Building Test Coordinator in both Memphis Shelby County Schools and Gestalt Community Schools in Memphis, Tennessee.

It is expected that the Building Test Coordinator will lead as logistical expert for all assessments so that the testing support team can execute logistics efficiently. The Building Test Coordinator will receive information and training throughout the school year and will be responsible for providing professional learning and development to all staff members involved in assessing our scholars.

The Building Test Coordinator will collaborate with the School Counselor and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to provide technical support and analytical expertise that can help with analyzing data and planning data-informed actions with the testing support team. The testing support team will be responsible for assisting the Building Test Coordinator with the delineation of duties.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access Coordinator will be responsible for the following:

- Meeting with the Building Test Coordinator at least 6 weeks before state testing to determine needs.
- Meeting with the testing support team at least 3 weeks before state testing administration to determine needs.
- Ordering supplies and testing materials based on the total number of scholars enrolled.
- Communicating with the Special Education Teachers, ESL Teachers and School Counselors to ensure appropriate testing accommodations and testing environments are met for scholars with IEPs, ILPs, and 504 Plans.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in training and delivering professional learning and development on assessments delivery and test security to all teachers, school leaders, and staff members involved in testing.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in creating a testing schedule that aligns to Rutherford County Schools' assessment schedule.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in organizing and distributing test materials to teachers and staff members on testing days.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in securing and returning test materials to our testing vendor/authorizer's designated location, determined by testing guidelines.
- Reviewing and analyzing assessment results.
- Alongside the Proposed Executive Director, leading teachers, school leaders, and staff members through the analysis of assessments results.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in preparing the data report on the school-based level.
- Supporting the Building Test Coordinator in communicating test results schoolwide and to all stakeholders.

Section 1.3b: Describe the plan to collect and analyze academic data to ensure individual students make academic progress throughout the year. Explain how these plans will drive professional development for faculty and staff.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will establish a robust data-driven culture to guide academic instruction, school culture, and operations. Our Proposed Executive Director, along with the School Principals (as hired), will implement strategies from *Driven by Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, as well as practices from high-performing charter schools nationwide. This approach will ensure rigorous assessment practices, ongoing data analysis, and targeted instructional support for all scholars.

Academic Data Collection and Analysis. Teachers will administer a variety of rigorous assessments, including NWEA MAP benchmark tests, FastBridge progress monitoring, and Progress Learning interim assessments, to collect actionable academic data. These assessments will occur at regular intervals throughout the year and culminate in the TNReady assessments in the spring. After each assessment cycle, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access (and eventually, the Director of Academics) will lead teachers in conducting detailed data reflections. This process will involve:

- **Analyzing Assessment Results:** Identifying trends in scholar performance and determining gaps in mastery.
- **Action Planning:** Using data to adjust instructional strategies and design targeted interventions for scholars needing additional support.
- **Monitoring Progress:** Evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and strategies through ongoing data collection and reflection.

Driving Professional Development. The analysis of academic data will directly inform professional development for faculty and staff. Following each assessment cycle, data meetings will provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on scholar outcomes, discuss instructional strategies, and identify areas for growth. Using protocols outlined in *Driven by Data 2.0* and resources from the Relay Graduate School of Education, these meetings will focus on:

- Understanding assessment data and its implications for instruction.
- Collaboratively developing reteaching plans using proven instructional strategies, such as Activate Knowledge, Academic Monitoring, Modeling, and Guided Discourse.
- Building capacity for effective lesson planning, classroom management, and instructional delivery.

Weekly feedback sessions, classroom observations, and formal evaluations conducted three times annually will further support teachers in applying data insights to their practice. Scholar performance data will account for 35% of teacher evaluations, incentivizing a focus on measurable academic progress.

Collaboration with High-Performing Charter Schools. Through partnerships with BES-supported schools such as Memphis Merit Academy and Purpose Prep, Novus SMART Academy will adopt and adapt best practices for building a productive data-driven culture. Leaders at these schools have expertise in leading effective assessment analysis meetings, which our Proposed Executive Director will incorporate into Novus SMART Academy's professional learning framework.

Section 1.3 – Assessments
(Required for All Sponsors)

Summer and Ongoing Professional Development. To ensure all staff are equipped to meet scholars' academic needs, professional learning and development will begin in the summer and continue throughout the school year. Training sessions, led by the Proposed Executive Director, School Principals, or external experts, will focus on:

- Understanding the purpose and implementation of assessment tools.
- Developing skills for data analysis and action planning.
- Communicating assessment results and progress to scholars, families, and stakeholders.

Our data meetings will be facilitated using the data meetings protocol in Figure 20, as prescribed by Uncommon Schools resources located in the *Relay Graduate School of Education's Principal Instructional Leadership Quick Reference Guide* and *Driven by Data 2.0* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo.

Figure 20 - Data Meetings Protocol

<table>
<tr><td>Prepare</td><td>Before the Meeting</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>

Scholar Work Ready: Scholar exemplar and representative samples of work that meet the standard, is almost there and further off (including from scholars with disabilities and English language learners).
Lesson Materials Ready: Upcoming Lesson Plan(s), Pertinent Prompting Guides, Reteaching One-Pager
Prime the Pump: Unpack Standard Identify the Gaps in Scholar Understanding, Script the Reteach Plans
Lock In Participants: Core teachers who teach/support (i.e., general education, special education, and English language learners).
Preview Protocol with Teachers: Assign roles. Novice teachers speak first, veteran teachers add on and clarify, and leaders provide additional clarity at the end. Chart, preview the need for concision from more verbose team members, use of a timer, and creation of note-taking template.

</td></tr>
<tr><td>See It
12 minutes</td><td>See Past Success, See the Exemplar, and See and Analyze the Gap</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>
See Past Success (1 minute)

“Last week we planned to reteach _____ and we went from _____% of scholars demonstrating Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations performance to _____%. Nice job!”
“What actions did you take to reach this goal?”

See an Exemplar (3 minutes)

Narrow the Focus: “Today, I want to dive into [specific standard] and the following assessment item.”
Unpack the Standard/Text

Humanities: Analyze the text and task.
STEM: interpret the standard(s).
“ Take 1 minute in your own words: what do scholars need to know and be able to do to master this task and text?’
Chart It: Know and Show (or use a previous know/show chart).
Leader Goes Last: Add anything that is missing.

<table>
<tr><th>Need to Know</th><th>Able to Show</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Leader Goes Last: Add anything that is missing.
Unpack the teacher’s written exemplar.

“Take 1-2 minutes to review the exemplar. What were the keys to an ideal answer?”
“How does this [part of the exemplar] align with the standard?”
“Is there anything you would add to our chart of the unpacked standard?”

</td></tr>
</table>

- Analyze a scholar exemplar.
  - "Take 1 minute: How does your scholar exemplar compare to the teacher exemplar? Is there a gap?"
  - "Do scholars have different paths/evidence to demonstrate mastery of the standard?"
  - "Does the scholar exemplar offer something that your exemplar does not?"

See the Gap (5 minutes)

- Look at a representative sample of unmastered scholar work.
  - "Take 2 minutes: What are the key gaps between the rest of our scholar work and the exemplar?"
  - " Look Back at our Know/Show Chart : using the language of the standard and exemplar, what are the key misconceptions for our scholars?'
  - Please Note: When multiple teachers present each teacher determines the gap for their set of scholar work.

Name It
2 minutes

Stamp the Key Conceptual (know) and Procedural (show) Misunderstanding

Punch It: Stamp the Conceptual and Procedural Understanding

- "So our key area to reteach is _____".
  - The conceptual understanding (know): If they get this right and you ask them why, what do you want them to say?"
  - The procedural gap (show): The gap could be, but not limited to, annotating text, showing work, line-by-line computation, etc.
- Highlight the key parts of your Know/Show Chart or write down the highest leverage action for scholars.

Do It
20-45 minutes

Plan the Reteach, Practice, and Follow Up

Plan the Reteach for the Trending Gap (8-10 minutes)

- Select the reteach structure.
  - "Should we use _____ or _____? Why?"
    - Prompt to use the Structure for Reteaching guide when struggling to decide (see below).
- Select upcoming tasks and needed knowledge; identify the exemplar response.
  - Select Materials: task, text, scholar work to show-call, what to chart.
  - Activate/Drop Knowledge: "Is there knowledge we need to activate or teach that will help them understand during the reteach?"
  - "What is the ideal answer we want to see that will show we have closed the gap?"
  - If needed, ask this follow-up question: "What is the 'why' that scholars should be able to articulate?"
- Plan the reteach.
  - "Take _____ minutes and write your script. I will do the same so we can spar".
    - Modeling: Write the think-aloud and questions.
    - Guided Discourse: Select scholar work for show-call and write prompts.
  - Spar: "Let's compare our reteach plans. What do you notice? What can we pull from each to make the strongest reteach plan?"
  - Revise the plan.
- Plan the independent practice.
  - "What will you monitor to see if they are doing this correctly? What laps will you name?"

Practice the Gap (remaining time)

- "Let's practice".
  - Modeling: Practice modeling the thinking, precision of language, and checking for understanding.
  - Guided Discourse: Practice show-call, prompting scholars, and stamping the understanding.

- Academic Monitoring: Practice the laps, annotations, and prompts when scholars are stuck.
- If the teacher struggles during the practice: "I'm going to model the reteach for you. [Teach.] What do you notice?"
- Repeat until the practice is successful.
  - Check for Understanding: "What made this more effective?"
- Lock It In: "How does our practice meet or enhance what we planned for the reteach?"

Follow Up (last 2 minutes)

- Set the follow-up plan (i.e., went to teach, when to reassess, and when to revisit this data).
  - When Multiple Reteach Plans: Finalize which scholars will get which reteach plans.
  - Observe implementation within 24 hours and ensure the teacher sends reassessment data to the leader facilitating the data meeting.
  - Spiral: Identify multiple moments when the teacher can continue to assess and track mastery (i.e., Do Now questions, homework, modified independent practice).
- Move to the lowest scoring work.
  - "What scholars do we need to pull for tutoring? What do we need to remediate?"
  - "How can we adjust our monitoring plan to meet the needs of these scholars?"

Structures for Reteaching

Teach Scholars What They Need

Activate Knowledge: Prime Student Thinking

- Activate Knowledge
  - "What do we know about _____?"
  - Launch It: Recall most important knowledge needed for today's lesson.
  - Retrieve/Apply It: Give a simple task to retrieve knowledge (i.e., organize events in chronological order, quick math fluency).
  - Use Knowledge Organizer/Cheat sheet: Put all key points on 1-2 pages.
- Drop Knowledge Just in Time: Give them knowledge in the middle of the lesson when it will unlock understanding (i.e., stating definition of a vocabulary word that cannot be understood with context; given them historical context).

Academic Monitoring: Continue the Cycle of Monitoring and Responding

- Create a Monitoring Pathway
  - Create a seating chart to monitor scholars most efficiently.
  - Monitor the fastest writers first, then the scholars who need more support.
- Pen in Hand: Mark up Scholar Work
  - Give quick feedback (i.e., check, star, circle, code).
  - Cue scholars to revise answers with minimal intervention (i.e., name the error, ask them to fix it, tell them you will follow up).
- Collect Data
  - Check answers against your exemplar.
  - Track right/wrong answers or trends in the class as you circulate.

Modeling: Show the Scholars How

- Set up the think-aloud with a task.
  - Provide scholars with a clear "thinking job" for them to focus on during Think-Aloud (i.e., "What questions do I ask myself to solve this problem/read this text?").
  - Brighten the lines by using a clear cue for going in and out of the model (i.e., "And scene".).
- Model the thinking, not just the procedure.
  - Model replicable thinking steps that scholars can follow (i.e., "Hmm, so what is the prompt asking me to do?" or "Let me think. What do I already know about this time period?").
  - Vary your tone and cadence to sound different from a "teacher" voice.
  - Make your thinking visible (i.e., anchor chart, annotations, flow chart).
  - Emphasize key points and steps during the model.
- Check for understanding after the model.
  - Debrief the model by asking scholars to share their answer to the "thinking job".

	○ Stamp the key points/steps to make sure you draw out the aspects you want scholars to focus on. ○ Give scholars additional "at-bats" to practice independently. • Please Note: Use only when fewer than ⅓ of the scholars have the right answer.
	Guided Discourse: Guide Scholar Conversation • Show-Call ○ Option 1: Post both an exemplar and non-exemplar response for scholars to engage in a comparative analysis to identify the conceptual misunderstanding. ○ Option 2: Post an exemplar scholar response for scholars to analyze what makes it exemplary. ○ Option 3: Post a non-exemplar response reflective of the gap for scholars to analyze what the conceptual misunderstanding or error is and how to avoid it. • Strategically call on scholars. ○ Call on scholars based on zones of proximal development (i.e., first ask a scholar who is struggling, then one who is partially there, and only move to a scholar who is almost/fully there when other scholars cannot get there). ○ Use universal prompts (i.e., "Evaluate these responses". "Tell me more". "Agree or disagree? Why?"). ○ Use effective habits of discussion (i.e., have scholars respond to one another's thinking). • Stamp the key understanding. ○ What are the key things to remember when solving problems like these? ○ name the strategy/conceptual understanding and have scholars put it in their own words. • Please Note: Use only when some scholars struggle; trending error.

Teacher Evaluations. Scholar performance data will also be taken into consideration on conducting teacher evaluations throughout the school year. Teachers will receive ongoing feedback and support weekly throughout the school year and formal evaluations three times per school year, following interim assessments. Scholars' performance outcomes will count for 35% of teachers' formal evaluations. For teachers to receive an evaluation that meets or exceeds the goals, scholars must meet the performance goals established for each interim assessment. Scholars' work will inform teachers in classroom interactions, during ongoing checks for understanding, on daily exit tickets, and for weekly assessments in the classroom. Teachers' familiarity with scholars' work will help teachers make informed decisions about future instruction using the structures for reteaching outlined in the chart above (i.e., Activate Knowledge, Academic Monitoring, Modeling, and/or Guided Discourse). Teachers and staff members will receive professional learning and development in the summer and throughout the school year, led by our Proposed Executive Director, School Principals, and/or external experts to support understanding of the purpose of assessments, implementation of assessments tools, analysis of data, and communication of results and outcomes to our school community stakeholders. Figure 21 demonstrates how we will communicate results to our school community.

Figure 21 - Forms of Communication

Stakeholders	Form of Communication
Scholars	Our Proposed Executive Director and School Principals will be responsible for communicating schoolwide data to our scholars during school-based events and activities, such as but not limited to Noble Fest on Fridays. Teachers will also be responsible for communicating data during advisory and classes to share how our scholars are performing as individuals and as a community.
Families	Our Proposed Executive Director and School Principals will be responsible for communicating schoolwide data to families as follows during the following events and activities: College & Career Nights, Noble Fests, Parent Meetings, Family Advisory Council, Monthly Newsletters, and the school website. The Board of Directors will produce an annual report documenting our organizational growth towards goals that include schoolwide academic achievement data.
School Staff	In Year 1, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will lead the staff in a review of schoolwide data during scheduled Data Days throughout the year reflected on our Annual Academic Calendar (see **Attachment A** for more details).

Section 1.3 – Assessments (Required for All Sponsors)	
Board of Directors	Our Proposed Executive Director will report school academic data to the Academics Committee prior to the scheduled board meeting for review via our dashboard (chosen post-authorization with the Academics Committee). The Academics Committee will report the data to the entire Board of Directors for review and updates.
General Public	Our Proposed Executive Director and School Principals (as hired) will share our schoolwide data publicly on our school website using snapshots from our newsletters and annual organizational goals and reports.

Section 1.3c: Describe the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive to analyze, interpret, and use performance data to improve instruction.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will facilitate ongoing data collection and analysis of scholar academic progress throughout the school year during weekly data meetings, professional learning and development days, and our intensive deep data dive and reflection days in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. For more information regarding these days, please see our Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Annual Academic Calendar in **Attachment A**. During these sessions, teachers and school leaders will dedicate time to thoroughly analyze schoolwide data on academics, culture, and operations. Data will be examined by cohorts, subgroups, and individual scholars. This collaborative analysis will inform the development of actionable plans to address trends, gaps, and misconceptions in academic performance. Key components of the training include:

- **Guided Analysis of Scholar Data:** Teachers and school leaders will analyze assessment items, scholar responses, and overall trends using a structured framework of inquiry. For instance, they will address questions such as:
    - What do scholars need to know and do to achieve *Met Expectations* (Level 3) or *Exceeded Expectations* (Level 4)?
    - What misconceptions exist between the exemplar response and scholar responses?
    - How can instructional delivery address these misconceptions effectively?
    - What reteaching strategies and structures will target these areas for improvement?
    - How will progress be tracked post-reteaching?
- **Action Plan Development:** Based on their findings, teachers will develop targeted instructional strategies, including small group instruction and interventions such as activating prior knowledge, academic monitoring, modeling, and guided discourse.

In Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will spearhead the coaching and development of teachers, school leaders, and staff members in the effective use of scholar performance data. Weekly coaching meetings will provide tailored support to individual teachers, emphasizing data-informed instruction. These sessions will be led by the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal (Years 1 and beyond) and, as the school scales, by grade-band Assistant Principals and Instructional Coaches.

On Wednesdays, teachers will participate in professional learning and development sessions that integrate Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) data reviews. These sessions will include analysis of academic and behavioral data and training on targeted interventions for all scholars. Over the course of the year, teachers and school leaders will engage in 23 full days of professional learning and development designed to deepen their expertise in analyzing, interpreting, and utilizing schoolwide data to enhance instruction and operational outcomes.

Deep data dive and reflection days in the Fall, Winter, and Spring will offer intensive opportunities to dissect assessment data and immediately respond to trends. With school leader support, teachers will create data-driven action plans to provide remediation for scholars with low-to-no mastery of standards and skills.

External Training and Support for School Leadership. School leaders will participate in ongoing professional development alongside leaders from other high-performing charter schools, such as Memphis Merit Academy, Crosstown High School, Gestalt Community Schools in Memphis, and Purpose Preparatory Academy, LEAD Public Schools, and Valor Collegiate Academies in Nashville. These partnerships will provide insights into best practices for data analysis and instructional improvement.

The Proposed Executive Director will also benefit from BES Follow-on Support, including personalized coaching from a BES-assigned mentor. This mentor will provide guidance on leveraging scholar data to drive decision-making and lead the instructional team in data-driven action planning. Collectively, these systems, partnerships, and training initiatives will ensure that Novus SMART Academy's educators and leaders are equipped with the tools and expertise to use performance data to enhance instruction, remediate learning gaps, and accelerate scholar achievement. Letters of support from partner organizations appear in **Attachment D**.

Section 1.4 – School Calendar and Schedule
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.4 a: Provide the annual academic calendar for the proposed school as Attachment A.

Please see our 180-day school calendar as Attachment A: Click Here.

Section 1.4 b: Provide the proposed school's detailed daily schedule by grade as Attachment B. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Please see our daily schedule as Attachment B: Click Here. Our instructional hours of operation are as follows:

- Mondays: 7:30 AM - 3:45 PM
- Tuesdays: 7:30 AM - 3:45 PM
- Wednesdays: 7:30 AM – 2:00 PM (early release day; professional learning and development for teachers, school leaders, and staff members; instruction meets number of days and hours to be in full compliance)
- Thursday: 7:30 AM - 3:45 PM
- Fridays: 7:30 AM - 3:45 PM

Section 1.4 c: Explain why the academic calendar and schedule will be optimal for student learning. Summarize plans to provide time within the daily schedule for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring, and other academic activities.

The proposed academic calendar and daily schedule at Novus SMART Academy are intentionally designed to maximize student learning and address the specific academic needs of scholars in La Vergne and Smyrna. Our approach emphasizes extended learning time in literacy and math, targeted interventions, and enrichment opportunities to foster a strong foundation in essential skills. These design choices are informed by local data showing that 11 schools in the area fall below the state's math proficiency rate, and 12 schools fall below the literacy proficiency rate. Our schedule directly addresses these challenges, ensuring all scholars have the time and support needed to excel.

Extended Learning Time for Core Subjects. The daily schedule prioritizes literacy and math instruction across all grade levels. Scholars in Grades K-2 will engage in 150 minutes of literacy instruction. This includes a comprehensive approach to literacy development through activities such as Core Connections, read-aloud sessions, personalized learning via IXL, and structured application tasks. In Grades 3-5, scholars will receive 120 minutes of literacy instruction daily, incorporating reading, writing, language, speaking, and listening skills. For Grades 6-8, the schedule allocates 90 minutes daily for English/Language Arts, ensuring scholars build the reading stamina and analytical skills needed for success in high school and beyond. Additionally, all scholars receive extended time in math to deepen conceptual understanding and apply rigorous problem-solving techniques in small-group settings.

Targeted Instruction, Interventions and Enrichment Opportunities. For English Language Learners (ELLs), the Structured English Immersion program offers targeted instruction in foundational literacy, vocabulary development, grammar, and comprehension skills. This program aligns with ELPA21 standards and supports ELL scholars in Grades K-8 with a focus on academic language acquisition and content-specific literacy. To close achievement gaps, Novus SMART Academy integrates time for tiered interventions and enrichment into the daily schedule. Scholars in Grades K-8 will have 60 minutes daily for Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Academics (MTSS-Academics). These dedicated blocks provide structured Tier II and Tier III interventions aligned with the State of Tennessee RTI2 Implementation Guide, ensuring that every scholar receives personalized support to meet their needs. The extended school day also includes dedicated time for intellectually gifted scholars, who will participate in pull-out instruction or differentiated learning opportunities within core classes by the Licensed Gifted Education Teacher. Gifted instruction will employ research-based strategies, including differentiation, textual analysis, and within-class grouping, to challenge and engage advanced learners.

Balanced Learning Through Celebration and Exploration. In addition to academic rigor, the schedule includes time for character development, college and career exploration, and community celebration. Scholars will engage in College and Career Exploration sessions twice weekly, featuring guided activities, guest speakers, and virtual tours. Character Education lessons twice weekly that will emphasize empathy, resilience, and the school's core values through interactive activities. On Fridays, scholars will participate in Noble Fest, celebrating their achievements and demonstrating core values. This event fosters community engagement and provides opportunities for scholars to enjoy team-based activities, academic competitions, and club involvement.

Inclusion and Support for All Scholars. Our schedule reflects a commitment to inclusion by ensuring that all scholars, including those with disabilities, gifted learners, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged scholars, have access to high-quality instruction and support. Dedicated collaborative planning time for teachers on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays ensures that educators are prepared to deliver effective instruction and interventions. Additionally, summer school sessions in June will extend academic support into the summer months, further addressing learning gaps.

Section 1.4 – School Calendar and Schedule
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.4 d: Describe any proposed extra-curricular or co-curricular activities or any other student-focused programming the proposed school will offer. Detail when these activities will start, their frequency, and their funding sources.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will offer extracurricular activities in Year 1 that encourage scholars to collaborate and communicate appropriately with their peers, to think critically and creatively, and to solve real-world challenges through asset-based learning in arts/electives and character education. These necessary skills will prepare our scholars for their chosen college and career paths and will increase their capacity to make an impact in our society.

Our budget reflects growth to four Related Arts Teachers as follows: Physical Education Teacher (beginning Year 1 and beyond); Technology Teacher (beginning Year 2 and beyond); Art Teacher (beginning Year 3 and beyond); and Music Teacher (beginning Year 5 and beyond).

In alignment with our mission and vision as it relates to college and career readiness, we will pursue partnerships with the Smyrna Boys and Girls Club, which understands that the key to success starts with a solid education. This organization shows scholars that with a focused approach and hard work, they can reach their goals in school and beyond. Smyrna Boys and Girls Club strives for every member of their community to complete high school with a plan for college or career. Their programs include the following:

- Power Hour (homework assistance): Since the end of January 2024, our Proposed Executive Director has been volunteering at the Smyrna Boys and Girls Club on Tuesdays to provide homework and tutoring support as part of our community service commitment.
- The inSPIRE Literacy Program, which is designed to increase fluency and comprehension.
- The Career Launch Program, which is designed for teens to help them explore careers and prepare for the workforce.
- The Money Matters Program, which is designed to promote financial literacy and responsibility amongst teens.
- The Diplomas to Degrees Program, which is designed for college exploration, goal setting, and touring various colleges.
- The STEAM program, which is designed with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will continue to engage with the community to secure other strong relationships and partnerships that will be beneficial to our scholars and families over time. With intentional focus on our mission and vision to ensure our scholars are ready for their chosen college and career paths with the capacity to activate their critical and creative thinking, we will focus on Related Arts and Technology for our extracurricular activities outside core academic instruction.. We plan to collaborate with other organizations across Rutherford County already offering extracurricular activities, such as but not limited to the Center for the Arts and the Middle Tennessee STEM Innovation Hub in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and North Rutherford Family YMCA and Carpe Artista in Smyrna, Tennessee. Since these organizations offer their own programs and extracurricular activities, we will establish partnerships and will encourage our scholars and families to participate in these programs and extracurricular activities until we have the school-based capacity to offer these programs and activities on campus over time. All offerings, including when they will begin, how often they will occur, and how they will be funded, will be discussed through the partnerships established by each organization and Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Section 1.4 e: Describe any additional academic programs that the school will offer such as Saturday school, summer school, extra remediation, and student acceleration programs pursuant to T.C.A. § 49- 6-1503. For each program, provide the following:

- **State the duration and list the hours it will be available each week to identified students.**
- **Detail the anticipated number of students and the method used to identify them.**
- **State whether the program is mandatory for identified students.**
- **Outline anticipated resources and staffing needs.**

In alignment with the requirements set forth by the Tennessee Department of Education, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-6-1503, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will operate a comprehensive Summer School program in June to address academic learning loss and ensure compliance with the **Promotion and Retention of Third Grade Students** policy. This program will provide targeted remediation and enrichment opportunities for identified scholars, with a primary focus on foundational literacy and numeracy skills critical for academic progression.

Promotion and Retention of Third Grade Students. Under the **Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act**, third-grade students who score "below" or "approaching" proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) are subject to mandatory retention unless they meet one of the following exemptions or remediation requirements:

Section 1.4 – School Calendar and Schedule
(Required for All Sponsors)

Exemptions

- Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate in standardized assessments or require alternative assessments.
- Students classified as English Learners (EL) with less than two years of English language instruction.
- Students who demonstrate sufficient reading proficiency through a state-approved alternative pathway (e.g., a portfolio).

Remediation Requirements for Promotion

- Participation in a summer learning camp with an attendance rate of at least 90%.
- Demonstration of adequate growth through post-summer assessments.
- Engagement in a tutoring program during the subsequent school year (for students scoring "approaching" proficiency).

Program Duration and Schedule. The Summer School program will operate for four weeks in June, beginning on the first Monday of the month and concluding on the last Friday of the month. Scholars will attend the program five days per week, Monday through Friday, for four hours per day. The daily schedule will run from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, totaling **20 instructional hours per week** and **80 hours across the program's duration.**

Student Identification and Anticipated Enrollment. Novus SMART Academy anticipates serving approximately 60 students across grades K-8 at full capacity during Summer School, with a focused effort on **third-grade students requiring remediation** under T.C.A. § 49-6-1503. Third-grade students will be identified for participation based on the following criteria:

- **TCAP ELA Performance:** Students scoring "below" or "approaching" proficiency in ELA will automatically qualify for the program.
- **End-of-Year Benchmark Assessments:** Administered in May, these will identify students with reading deficiencies or significant learning gaps.
- **Teacher Recommendations:** Based on in-class performance, progress monitoring data, and intervention history.

Ensuring that every third-grade student required to attend Summer School can participate, even without school-provided transportation, will require a proactive and collaborative approach with families. From the moment students are identified under the Promotion and Retention policy, we will engage in transparent and supportive conversations with parents to emphasize the importance of Summer School in helping their child meet the necessary academic benchmarks. These discussions will not only focus on the necessity of attendance but also on partnering with families to find practical solutions for transportation challenges.

We will host informational meetings, both in-person and virtual, to walk families through the Summer School expectations and requirements while also opening the floor for them to express any concerns about logistics. By fostering an open dialogue early, we can identify families who may need assistance and work together to develop individualized solutions. One of the key strategies will involve coordinating carpooling efforts among families. By creating a structured system where parents can connect with others in their neighborhood, we can help facilitate transportation support within the community. We will maintain a list of families who are willing to provide rides and those in need of transportation, ensuring that all students have access to a reliable way to attend. Additionally, we will work with local community organizations, churches, and afterschool programs to explore potential partnerships that may offer transportation assistance.

For families with unique circumstances, we will take a hands-on approach, helping them explore alternative options such as rideshare arrangements or seeking support from extended family members. We will also consider adjusting the Summer School schedule where possible, ensuring that families can coordinate transportation in a way that aligns with their work commitments. Our goal is to eliminate transportation as a barrier to student success. By working closely with families, leveraging community resources, and encouraging collaboration among parents, we will create a system where every student who needs Summer School can attend, receive the necessary remediation, and move forward confidently to the next grade level.

Program Goals and Instructional Design. The Summer School curriculum will be designed to address key areas of academic need, with a focus on literacy interventions aligned to state standards. The goals include ensuring that third-grade scholars demonstrate adequate growth in reading proficiency by the end of the program; providing intensive remediation and progress monitoring to close learning gaps; and preparing all scholars for academic success in the upcoming school year. Key instructional components include small group instruction with no more than five students to ensure targeted support. We will also offer one-on-one tutoring for scholars with the greatest needs. We will engage scholars in literacy activities using decodable texts, phonics-based instruction, and fluency practice. We will also incorporate daily progress monitoring to track improvement.

Section 1.4 – School Calendar and Schedule
(Required for All Sponsors)

Summer School Staffing and Resources. For third-grade scholars identified under the Promotion and Retention policy, participation in Summer School will be mandatory to meet the remediation requirement and avoid retention unless they qualify for an exemption. Beginning in Year 3, Novus SMART Academy will offer Summer School to accommodate our first year of third-grade scholars who are impacted by this policy. To implement the Summer School program effectively, Novus SMART Academy will employ two Licensed Teachers based on the number of scholars who are required to attend Summer School, and who are trained in literacy interventions. We will also employ two Teachers-in-Residence to assist with small group instruction and logistical support. We will use Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum for Grades K-5 and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180 curriculum for Grades 6-8 which are high-quality intervention programs for individualized learning, and we will administer pre-and-post program assessments aligned to the Tennessee state standards. Licensed Teachers and Teachers-in-Residence will receive training on the specific instructional approaches, progress monitoring tools, and the Promotion and Retention policy requirements to ensure consistent implementation (see Attachment W for operating costs for staffing).

Parental Communication and Support. Families of identified third-grade students will receive a detailed notification explaining their child's TCAP ELA performance and its implications under the Promotion and Retention policy; the requirement to attend Summer School and meet the 90% attendance threshold; and available options for exemptions, tutoring, or alternative promotion pathways. Prior to the program, parents will be invited to an orientation session outlining expectations, program benefits, and strategies to support their child's learning at home.

Outcomes and Accountability. By the end of the Summer School program, all participating third-grade students will be assessed to determine their readiness for promotion, using both state-approved post-assessments and progress data collected during Summer School. For scholars who still require additional support, engagement in a year-long tutoring program will be arranged to ensure continued growth and compliance with state guidelines.

Commitment to Academic Growth. Novus SMART Academy's Summer School program is a cornerstone of its commitment to academic excellence, ensuring that no scholar is left behind. By meeting the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-6-1503 and addressing third-grade literacy gaps, the program will set the stage for lifelong learning and achievement for all scholars.

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.5 a: Describe the community from which the proposed school intends to draw students. Include demographic profiles, existing schools within the community (including other charter schools in the area), and targeted zip codes. Discuss the academic performance and enrollment trends of these schools (e.g., TCAP, TVAAS, *Ready Graduate*, etc.).

The Tennessee Department of Education Report Card data show that Rutherford County Schools outperformed the State of Tennessee as a whole in math proficiency (50.5% versus 36.4% statewide), in English/Language Arts proficiency (48.1% versus 38.8% statewide), in Science proficiency (50.4% versus 44.3% statewide), and in Social Studies proficiency (57% versus 44.7% statewide); and Rutherford County Schools' graduation rate is 96.2% as compared to the 90.6% statewide rate. Rutherford County Schools specifically located in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities where Novus SMART Academy (K-8) proposes to open and operate are as follows: math proficiency (39% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 50.5% across the entire district as compared to 36.4% statewide), English/Language Arts proficiency (39.4% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 48.1% across the entire district as compared to 38.8% statewide), Science proficiency (43.7% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 50.4% across the entire district as compared to 44.3% statewide), and Social Studies proficiency (46.4% in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 57% across the entire district as compared to 44.7% statewide); and 95.7% graduation rate in La Vergne and Smyrna versus 96.2 across the entire district as compared to the 90.6% statewide rate. Focusing on the communities of La Vergne and Smyrna, data revealed that 61% of scholars perform below the statewide average in math (including two high schools), 60.6% of scholars perform below the statewide average in English/Language Arts, 56.3% of scholars perform below the statewide average in Science (including one high school), and 53.6% of scholars perform below the statewide average in Social Studies (including two high schools).

Figures 22-26 display comparisons of the math, reading, science, and social studies proficiency scores of the state of Tennessee as a whole and of Rutherford County Schools and operating charter schools in La Vergne and Smyrna, which is the community from which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) intends to draw students. The figures also include a summary of demographic profiles, including ethnicity, economic disadvantage, scholars with disabilities, and English language learners. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adopt the strategic priorities to provide early interventions that address scholars' academic needs and support the whole child. We see an opportunity to provide high-quality academic instruction with extended time and blended learning in literacy and math using a strategic two-teacher model, responding to the gap between high-achieving and low-achieving scholars in this community beginning in Grades K-1.

Figure 22 - La Vergne and Smyrna School-Based Data Points: Elementary Schools

Rutherford County Schools Elementary Schools in La Vergne & Smyrna								
Name of School No. of Scholars	Scholars' Demographic Characteristics					Proficiency		
	Economically Disadvantaged Students with Disability English Language Learners	Ethnicity						
		White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Math (State: 36%)	Reading (State: 39%)	Science (State: 44%)
Cedar Grove 839	24% 12% 43%	27%	18%	50%	5%	43%	41%	44%
David Youree 701	35% 11% 27%	26%	35%	33%	6%	22%	30%	26%
John Colemon 509	26% 16% 35%	30%	22%	42%	6%	34%	34%	36%

La Vergne Lake **840**	25% 13% 39%	22%	32%	43%	3%	32%	32%	31%
Rock Springs **1204**	21% 9% 31%	42%	23%	24%	11%	44%	43%	46%
Rocky Fork **963**	23% 10% 32%	42%	21%	26%	11%	39%	42%	46%
Roy L. Waldron **1259**	29% 10% 45%	19%	29%	49%	3%	22%	21%	28%
Simon Springs	Simon Springs Community School opened in August 2024 and serves a small population of elementary and middle school students needing behavior intervention. Located in La Vergne, the building originally opened as LaVergne Primary School and most recently served as the Roy Waldron Elementary annex. More information to come…							
Smyrna **743**	28% 14% 47%	23%	12%	59%	6%	38%	37%	38%
Smyrna Primary **577**	23% 10% 35%	33%	21%	32%	14%	30%	37%	41%
Stewarts-boro **702**	22% 11% 25%	51%	15%	29%	5%	65%	50%	62%
Stewarts Creek **1342**	11% 10% 20%	65%	14%	13%	8%	72%	60%	62%

Figure 23 - La Vergne and Smyrna School-Based Data Points: Middle Schools

Rutherford County Schools Middle Schools in La Vergne & Smyrna								
Name of School **No. of Scholars**	**Scholars' Demographic Characteristics**					**Proficiency**		
	Economically Disadvantaged **Students with Disability** **English Language Learners**	**Ethnicity**						
		White	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Other**	**Math (State: 36%)**	**Reading (State: 39%)**	**Science (State: 44%)** **Social Studies (State: 45%)**

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment (Required for All Sponsors)

La Vergne **1094**	26% 9% 32%	20%	31%	46%	3%	28%	23%	27% 33%
Rock Springs **1090**	21% 9% 30%	35%	22%	34%	9%	46%	32%	42% 52%
Rocky Fork **841**	25% 11% 23%	39%	20%	31%	10%	47%	32%	44% 56%
Smyrna **877**	26% 9% 33%	29%	17%	46%	8%	32%	26%	38% 46%
Stewarts Creek **1010**	12% 7% 16%	63%	15%	16%	6%	50%	51%	64% 70%
La Vergne **1094**	26% 9% 32%	20%	31%	46%	2%	28%	23%	27% 33%

Figure 24 - La Vergne and Smyrna School-Based Data Points: High Schools

Rutherford County Schools High Schools in La Vergne & Smyrna								
Name of School **No. of Scholars** **Graduation Rate**	**Scholars' Demographic Characteristics**					**Proficiency**		
	Economically Disadvantaged **Students with Disability** **English Language Learners**	**Ethnicity**				**Math (State: 36%)**	**Reading (State: 39%)**	**Science (State: 44%)** **Social Studies (State: 45%)**
		White	**Black**	**Hispanic**	**Other**			
La Vergne **2115** **92%**	24% 8% 21%	19%	30%	48%	3%	18%	39%	43% 31%
Smyrna **2254** **96%**	24% 7% 17%	35%	22%	37%	6%	26%	44%	51% 34%
Stewarts Creek **2446** **99%**	12% 6% 12%	58%	19%	17%	6%	39%	52%	48% 56%

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 25 - La Vergne and Smyrna School-Based Data Points: Specialty Schools

Rutherford County Schools Specialty Schools in La Vergne & Smyrna								
Name of School No. of Scholars Graduation Rate	Scholars' Demographic Characteristics					Proficiency		
	Economically Disadvantaged Students with Disability English Language Learners	Ethnicity				Math (State: 36%)	Reading (State: 39%)	Science (State: 44%) Social Studies (State: 45%)
		White	Black	Hispanic	Other			
Smyrna West Alternative 71	28% <1% 14%	24%	42%	30%	4%	< 5%	< 5%	< 5% < 5%
Thurman Francis Magnet Arts Academy 662	<5% <5% <5%	68%	18%	6%	8%	>95%	>95%	>95% >95%
Virtual School 361	11% 7% >99%	65%	20%	11%	4%	41%	57%	58% 46%

Figure 26 - La Vergne and Smyrna School-Based Data Points: Operating Charter School

Operating Charter Schools in La Vergne & Smyrna								
Name of School No. of Scholars Graduation Rate	Scholars' Demographic Characteristics					Proficiency		
	Economically Disadvantaged Students with Disability English Language Learners	Ethnicity				Math (State: 36%)	Reading (State: 39%)	Science (State: 44%) Social Studies (State: 45%)
		White	Black	Hispanic	Other			
American Classical Academy Rutherford	American Classical Academy Rutherford opened in August 2024 after its application was approved by the Rutherford County Board of Education in La Vergne, Tennessee. More information to come…							
Springs Empower Academy	Spring Empower Academy opened in August 2024 after its application was approved by the Rutherford County Board of Education in Smyrna, Tennessee. More information to come…							

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.5 b: Describe the community's demand and need for the school and detail how this demand or need was identified. Describe how the proposed school's educational options differ from those available in the geographic region.

We acknowledge concerns raised about the level of community support for Novus SMART Academy (K–8) shared by Rutherford County Schools, however, it is important to share the authentic story of how our school has been built from the ground up by the very community it is designed to serve. On March 31, 2025, Novus SMART Academy submitted documentation to Dr. Jeff McCann that included the results of the Community Connections Survey (over 100 Rutherford County residents included), the Family Connections Survey in English, and the Family Connections Survey in Spanish as promised during our Capacity Interview (see survey results in Attachment D). 26 families are actively engaged with us and 19 are ready to enroll their children, while the remaining 7 have questions; not about our school model, which they are excited about, but about charter schools in general (see survey results in Attachment D). Their curiosity reflects a desire to be informed partners in their children's education, not a sign of reluctance or opposition. We welcome their questions and continue to build trust through transparency and care.

To date, Novus SMART Academy has personally connected with over 350 community stakeholders and engaged more than 15 early childhood centers across La Vergne and Smyrna. Our consistent and heartfelt presence at Kindergarten Fairs and local family and community events reflects our deep commitment to building genuine relationships. One particularly memorable moment that captured the spirit of our outreach occurred during Read Across America Week. Our proposed Executive Director, Dr. Jeremy Sager, dressed as the Cat in the Hat and brought stories to life for children in daycares, both in person and virtually. This joyful experience not only delighted young children but also fostered meaningful, personal connections with families and educators.

Our outreach efforts are never performative; they are intentionally relational and grounded in trust-building.

In addition, we have partnered with Meredith McGann, Director of Policy & Outreach at Tennesseans for Student Success, and GrowthFuel Marketing to strengthen our community engagement. With their support, we launched targeted marketing emails using a data set of 599 families, each with a child between the ages of 4 and 7, who reside in the 37167 or 37086 zip codes and have high likelihood scores (80–100) for both School Switch and School Choice. While we do not have permission to include this data in our application, a printed copy was provided to Dr. Jeff McCann, the Coordinator of Choice and Charter Schools at Rutherford County Schools, for review alongside the amended application.

We have hosted over 70 outreach events, built more than 235 meaningful connections with community partners, conducted over 200 one-on-one interviews, Zoom calls, and surveys with families, and collected over 300 signed petitions of support on change.org. In addition, we have received more than 60 formal letters of support from community partners who are genuinely invested in seeing our school succeed.

What sets Novus SMART Academy apart is not only the strength of our Founding Team or the quality of our academic model, but the story of how this school came to be. Unlike existing public charter schools in Rutherford County that follow a pre-set template developed by charter management organizations, Novus SMART Academy was created by the community, for the community. Every element of our school, from academic priorities and enrichment offerings to school culture and family engagement strategies, was developed with direct input from the families and stakeholders we aim to serve.

This is a grassroots effort in the truest sense of the word. Novus SMART Academy is not designed to impose a vision but to reflect one, shaped by community surveys, focus groups, and listening sessions with local families and educators. As a result, families do not see Novus SMART Academy as just another school. They see it as *their* school. They recognize themselves in its mission, its values, and in the promises it makes to their children.

It is true that a recent community survey cited an overall lack of support from some Rutherford County residents. We do not dismiss those results, but we believe they tell only part of the story. That data reflects broader community questions about charter schools as a concept, not about Novus SMART Academy specifically. And this is precisely why our ongoing outreach, education, and relationship-building efforts matter so deeply. We are not merely building a school; we are building trust, one conversation, one story, one relationship at a time.

The real measure of community support lies not solely in numbers, but in the depth of our connections, the sincerity of family involvement, and the clarity of the shared vision we've co-created. Novus SMART Academy will not simply operate in a community; it will be born of the community. That distinction is what makes our school not only necessary but truly transformative.

The founding story of Novus SMART Academy begins with a shared commitment to transform education, grounded in our personal experiences as students, parents, and guardians. Our mission stems from a deep conviction to offer a fresh and extraordinary school experience for scholars and families. The name *Novus*, derived from the Latin word for innovation,

symbolizes renewal and reinvention. We believe that every scholar deserves access to high-quality academic instruction, regardless of their academic performance, behavior, mindset, socioeconomic status, or cultural background. This belief is especially urgent in La Vergne and Smyrna, where the need for transformative educational opportunities is profound.

The demand for Novus SMART Academy is rooted in a clear understanding of these communities' needs, informed by rigorous research, data analysis, and engagement with families, educators, and local leaders. Rutherford County has long struggled with achieving consistent academic outcomes for all students. Underachievement in literacy and numeracy continues to limit long-term success for many children. Families in La Vergne and Smyrna who choose Novus SMART Academy have made it clear: they want schools that not only meet, but exceed, current academic standards and equip their children for college, careers, and beyond. Their feedback, paired with our review of state and local academic data, underscores the urgent need for a school like Novus SMART Academy.

Our commitment to innovative educational practices sets us apart. Novus SMART Academy's curriculum is designed to go beyond traditional approaches, preparing scholars to think critically, collaborate effectively, and solve real-world challenges. Our model includes Applied-Based Learning (ABL) in the arts and electives, Integrated-Based Learning (IBL) in writing and research that blends reading, writing, and social studies, and Project-Based Learning (PBL) in science, math, and technology. These approaches ensure that all scholars—regardless of starting point—experience engaging, rigorous, and relevant learning that meets their unique needs and builds lifelong skills.

To address academic disparities beginning in kindergarten, Novus SMART Academy incorporates extended learning time, blended learning strategies, and a strategic two-teacher classroom model to ensure personalized support for each scholar. Our approach is inspired by high-performing schools in similar communities, such as Memphis Merit Academy, Purpose Preparatory Academy, and Valor Collegiate Academies. Purpose Prep's designation as a top 5% school in Tennessee and Valor's recognition as a Reward School demonstrate the outcomes we strive to replicate and build upon.

Novus SMART Academy will offer educational options that are significantly different from those currently available in the region. Where existing schools may offer general academic instruction, we provide an individualized, whole-child approach. Our model blends rigorous academics with a robust character education program and research-based support systems. Daily advisory lessons, morning meetings, Community Circles, Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) sessions, and weekly celebrations are embedded into the culture of our school. These components are not ancillary; they are essential to cultivating a learning environment where scholars thrive both academically and socially.

Our Character Education program is interwoven into every aspect of the school day, reinforcing the idea that every scholar plays an important role in the success of the community. We are committed to building a school culture where each child feels seen, heard, and valued. This extends to our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for academics and behavior, which will ensure that every scholar receives the individualized supports they need to succeed.

In every way, Novus SMART Academy reflects the heart and aspirations of the La Vergne and Smyrna communities. It is not just a new school; it is a movement toward educational excellence and empowerment. We are not only opening doors for students, but we are also opening minds, expanding opportunities, and redefining what is possible for public education in Rutherford County.

Section 1.5 c: Complete the provided templates for Enrollment Summary (Table 1) and Anticipated Demographics (Table 2). Describe the data, factors, and methodology used to determine initial enrollment projections. The information provided on these tables must match that provided on the operating budget template.

Novus SMART Academy will implement a deliberate, slow-growth model to ensure a strong foundation for scholars and families. We will launch in August 2026 with 192 founding scholars in Grades K-1 and add one grade level each year until reaching full capacity in Grades K-8 by August 2033. At full capacity, our school will serve 864 scholars, divided into three grade bands—Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, and Grades 6-8. This intentional structure supports a smaller, close-knit learning environment where scholars can fully engage in Activity-Based Learning (ABL), Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL), and Project-Based Learning (PBL). These approaches will be tailored to meet the needs of scholars and families, creating meaningful and impactful educational experiences.

Commitment to Backfilling and Sustained Enrollment. Novus SMART Academy will backfill all available seats as vacancies arise, committing to the academic success of every scholar who transitions into our school community. Our recruitment strategy will be dynamic and ongoing, attracting families through clear communication, compelling outreach, and a commitment to excellence. A bilingual operations team will provide support to scholars and families during enrollment and throughout their time at our school, ensuring comfort, accessibility, and the ability to express their unique needs fully. Additionally, the operations team will maintain monthly contact with waitlisted families, fostering sustained interest and engagement with the school.

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

Classroom Structure and Small-Group Instruction. Scholars will be divided into cohorts of 24, with a two-educator classroom model designed to facilitate small-group instruction during literacy and math rotations in Grades K-5. In Grades 6-8, scholars will transition to a departmentalized structure, with the two-educator model specifically supporting English/Language Arts and Math classes to maintain the benefits of small-group learning. This structure ensures that teachers can closely monitor scholar progress and provide targeted, data-driven instruction tailored to individual needs.

High-Quality Instruction and Community Focus. Central to Novus SMART Academy's mission is the delivery of rigorous, high-quality instruction rooted in ABL, IBL, and PBL methodologies. This approach will empower scholars to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills while closely monitoring progress to ensure academic success. With a full-capacity enrollment of 864 scholars, our school community will prioritize building strong relationships—ensuring that scholars, families, teachers, and staff members are known, loved, and respected. From this foundation, we will collectively strive to meet ambitious academic goals.

Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Community. Novus SMART Academy recognizes the diversity of families in Rutherford County, particularly in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities. Our school will offer an additional, tailored educational option to address the unique needs of scholars as they progress through their K-8 public school experience. By intentionally designing our school model and cultivating a supportive environment, we aim to partner with families to provide an extraordinary educational experience. Table 2 displays the demographics we anticipate in our school community based on the current demographics of Rutherford County Schools in La Vergne and Smyrna. The figure displays the percentages of scholars who are economically disadvantaged, identified as students with disabilities, and/or identified as English language learners.

Section 1.5 d: Provide as Attachment C the proposed school's Enrollment Policy, which should include and align with the following:

- **Tentative dates related to the school's application period and enrollment deadlines and procedures;**
- **Non-discriminatory admission policies, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-107;**
- **Any proposed articulation agreements, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-113; and**
- **Policies and procedures for student waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.**

See Attachment C: Click Here

Section 1.5 e: Explain how the school will receive and process enrollment applications and detail the school's plan to conduct an enrollment lottery if the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. Enrollment lottery plans must align with T.C.A. § 49-13- 113, T.C.A. §49-13-106, and SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.04.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and efficient enrollment process. To achieve this, the school will utilize the PowerSchool Unified Operations Enrollment system, a comprehensive platform designed to manage applications, conduct enrollment lotteries, and streamline the entire enrollment process. Below is a detailed narrative explaining how Novus SMART Academy will receive and process enrollment applications, as well as conduct its enrollment lottery in alignment with T.C.A. § 49-13-113, T.C.A. § 49-13-106, and SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.04.

Application Receipt and Processing. Novus SMART Academy will publicly announce the opening and closing dates of the enrollment application period through multiple communication channels, including the school's website, social media platforms, local newspapers, and community outreach events. Applications will be accepted electronically via the PowerSchool Unified Operations Enrollment system and in paper form at the school's administrative office to ensure accessibility for all families. Families must submit a completed application form, including the scholar's name, date of birth, grade level, and parent/guardian contact information. Proof of residency within the school's designated service area will also be required to verify eligibility. Upon submission, families will receive a confirmation of receipt via email or a printed acknowledgment for in-person submissions. The PowerSchool system will maintain secure, organized records of all applications, ensuring accurate tracking and reporting.

Determination of Capacity. Novus SMART Academy's capacity will be based on class sizes of 24 scholars per class, 4 cohort classes per grade level, and the building capacity as determined by local fire and safety codes. If the number of applications exceeds the available slots in any grade level or the building's overall capacity, a lottery will be conducted.

Enrollment Lottery Plan. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will notify all applicants of the date, time, and location of the lottery at least one week in advance. Notifications will be sent via email, posted on the school's website, and shared on social media. The lottery will be conducted within 30 days of the application deadline to comply with state regulations.

Lottery Procedures. The lottery will be held publicly and livestreamed to ensure transparency. The PowerSchool Unified Operations Enrollment system will be used to randomly assign numbers to each application and determine the order of selection.

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

Preference Categories. In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-13-113 and SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.04, the following preferences will be applied, in order, during the lottery:

- Siblings of currently enrolled students.
- Children of the school's full-time employees, provided they do not exceed 10% of total enrollment.
- Students residing within the school's designated service area.

Post-Lottery Notification. Families of selected students will receive notification of their placement via email or phone within 24 hours of the lottery's conclusion. Families not selected will be placed on a waitlist in the order determined by the lottery. Waitlist status will be communicated immediately after the lottery.

Enrollment Acceptance. Families of selected scholars must confirm their intent to enroll within 10 business days of receiving notification. Failure to respond within this timeframe will result in forfeiture of the enrollment slot, which will then be offered to the next student on the waitlist.

Compliance with State Laws and Rules. The lottery process will comply fully with T.C.A. § 49-13-113, which outlines the requirement for a random selection process when applications exceed capacity. T.C.A. § 49-13-106 ensures that charter schools provide equal access to all eligible students, and the enrollment process at Novus SMART Academy will reflect this principle. SBE Rule 0520-14-01-.04 mandates transparency and fairness in enrollment lotteries, which will be upheld using the PowerSchool system and third-party oversight.

Continuous Improvement. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will conduct an annual review of the enrollment process to identify areas for improvement and ensure continued compliance with state laws and best practices. Feedback from families and stakeholders will be solicited to enhance the efficiency and fairness of the system. This robust enrollment and lottery process reflects Novus SMART Academy's commitment to transparency and excellence in serving our scholars and their families.

Section 1.5 f: Describe the plan to recruit students in the year prior to opening. Identify which staff position will oversee these student recruitment campaigns and detail any marketing strategies, targeted community organizations, activities, events, responsible parties, and timelines that will be integral to student recruitment.

To achieve our ambitious enrollment target of 192 scholars with a waitlist of at least 96, Novus SMART Academy will execute a multi-faceted student recruitment plan. This strategy leverages partnerships, targeted outreach, and consistent engagement with families across the community.

Proposed Executive Director. The Proposed Executive Director (ED) will oversee all recruitment initiatives, ensuring alignment with our mission and goals. We will directly engage with high-level community partners, elected officials, and influential organizations to build credibility and secure support. The Proposed Executive Director will also collaborate with the Board Chair and the Community Engagement Task Force to evaluate recruitment progress and adjust strategies monthly.

Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance (hired January 2026). Once hired, the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will manage budgetary allocations for recruitment efforts, including advertising, materials, and event costs. The Director will also coordinate operational logistics for events (e.g., securing venues, scheduling staff, and ensuring compliance with school policies), and track enrollment metrics to provide data insights to inform strategy adjustments. Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will lead the school leadership team in managing scholar application drives and supporting families through the application process.

Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement (hired April 2026). Once hired, the Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement will serve as the face of Novus SMART Academy at community events, fostering strong connections with families. Alongside the Proposed Executive Director, this Assistant Principal will lead the execution of community-focused initiatives such as town hall meetings and school-wide celebrations to build trust and enthusiasm and develop messaging and materials in multiple languages. This Assistant Principal will also support the school leadership team in managing scholar application and enrollment events and supporting families through the application process.

Assistant Principal of Scholar Access (hired April 2026). Once hired, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will focus on building relationships with feeder Early Childhood Facilities and ensuring families understand the unique value proposition of Novus SMART Academy. The Assistant Principal will also oversee the training of canvassing teams to ensure they communicate effectively with diverse populations and support the school leadership team in managing scholar application drives and supporting families through the application process.

Recruitment Strategies and Activities. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has established and will continue to establish partnerships with community organizations by hosting monthly community events, collaborating with Early Childhood Facilities and community organizations, canvassing, hosting tabling events, attending/hosting information sessions and

town hall meetings, sharing monthly newsletters, printing materials in English and Spanish for mailers, social media blasts, website updates, and radio advertising.

The pre-opening recruitment strategy will include:

- **In-Person and Virtual Events:** Hosting open houses, community meetings, and information sessions at local libraries, community centers, and partner organizations.
- **Direct Outreach:** Flyers, door-to-door canvassing, and neighborhood tabling at community events, churches, and high-traffic areas.
- **Digital Presence:** Leveraging social media campaigns, targeted ads, and regular updates to the school's website to engage families online.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborating with local businesses, faith-based organizations, and early childhood centers to amplify the school's visibility and reach.

These efforts will culminate in multiple application drives to achieve a goal of 150% of Year 1 enrollment capacity with at least 288 applications to enroll 192 scholars with a waitlist of at least 96 scholars. The Board Chair works with the Proposed Executive Director to establish a Community Engagement Task Force immediately after authorization to oversee recruitment efforts, monitor progress, and adjust strategies as needed.

By maintaining an active presence in the community and adapting strategies to meet evolving needs, Novus SMART Academy will ensure both sustained enrollment and a lasting impact on the scholars and families it serves using the following recruitment and marketing strategies timeline in Figure 27:

Figure 27 - Implementing Recruitment and Marketing Strategies

Action Item	Members Responsible	Action Item Detailed	Completion Date
Survey of Proposed Communities	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	The Proposed Executive Director will collect information about the census of children between ages of 3 to 4. The Task Force will identify businesses and organizations who offer services to this population in Rutherford County, Tennessee.	January 2024 - Ongoing
Social Media Campaign	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	The Proposed Executive Director will begin social media campaigns for families to complete their letter of intent; increase interest in future enrollment via our school website and social media platforms.	January 2025 - Ongoing
Early Childhood Facilities Events and Collaborations	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	Host events and information sessions with early childhood facilities in Rutherford County, Tennessee, and send print materials home in scholar backpacks. Market summer camp opportunity for prospective scholars and families.	January 2025 - Ongoing
Host Summer Camp (8:00 AM-12:00 PM)	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force Educator Volunteers	We will collaborate with local organizations and host a 2-week summer camp with a focus on academics and character education activities.	June 2025
Communication, Marketing and Branding	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	The Proposed Executive Director will secure a contract with a local marketing company to update the school website, brochures, flyers, and print materials.	July 2025 - Ongoing

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment (Required for All Sponsors)			
Postal Marketing	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	Postcards will go out to families inviting them to our monthly community engagement event in August-September 2025. The mailers will go to families with children between the ages of 3-7.	July 2025
Pop-Up Community Engagement Events	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Community Engagement Task Force	Host pop-up events to meet additional recruiting needs and enhance Novus SMART Academy's presence in the community, fostering strong connections and increasing awareness of our school (i.e., DIY Volcano Eruption, Design Your Dream School).	August 2025 - September 2025
Postal Marketing	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	Postcards will go out to families inviting them to our monthly community engagement events in October-December 2025. The mailers will go to families with children between the ages of 3-7.	September 2025
Pop-Up Community Engagement Events	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Community Engagement Task Force	Host pop-up events to meet additional recruiting needs and enhance Novus SMART Academy's presence in the community, fostering strong connections and increasing awareness of our school (i.e., Slimy Science Spectacular, Tech Takeover Roadshow, Artful Adventures, Selfies with Santa).	October 2025 - December 2025
Postal Marketing	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	Postcards will go out to families inviting them to our monthly community engagement events in January-March 2026. The mailers will go to families with children between the ages of 3-7.	December 2025
Pop-Up Community Engagement Events	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Community Engagement Task Force	Host pop-up events to meet additional recruiting needs and enhance Novus SMART Academy's presence in the community, fostering strong connections and increasing awareness of our school (i.e., Arts & Crafts Extravaganza, Sports Spectacular, Science Exploration Day).	January 2026 - March 2026
Application Cycle	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance	The application cycle will begin on January 1, 2026. The application cycle will close on January 30, 2026, should we meet/exceed our 150% application goal.	January 30, 2026

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment (Required for All Sponsors)			
Lottery	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Community Engagement Task Force	The lottery will occur fifteen weekdays after the application closes on February 20, 2026. Scholars' names will be randomly selected for each available seat. Notifications will be sent to scholars and families about the lottery via email and through the United States postal services by March 6, 2026.	March 6, 2026
Postal Marketing	Proposed Executive Director Community Engagement Task Force	Postcards will go out to families inviting them to our monthly community engagement events in April -June 2026. The mailers will go to families with children between the ages of 3-7.	March 2025
Family-Focused Community Engagement Events	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Assistant Principal of Scholar Access Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement Community Engagement Task Force	Host events to create memorable experiences for scholars and families, showcase our school's Core Values, and attract new families to Novus SMART Academy (i.e., College and Career Exploration, Family Fun Fair, Storytime in the Park, Outdoor Movie Night).	April 2026 - June 2026
Mandatory Scholar Orientation (8:00 AM-12:00 PM)	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Assistant Principal of Scholar Access Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement Teachers, Staff, and School Leaders	Host a mandatory 3-day Scholar Orientation for Scholars to establish school culture, relationships, and routines with students before Day 1 of instruction on August 3, 2026. This also gives us the opportunity to backfill any open seats should there be vacancies.	July 28-30, 2026
Mandatory Parent/Guardian Orientation (8:00 PM-12:00 PM)	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance	Host a mandatory Parent/Guardian Orientation for Families to establish school culture, relationships, and routines. This also gives us the opportunity to backfill any open seats should there be vacancies.	July 28-30, 2026

	Assistant Principal of Scholar Access Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement Teachers, Staff, and School Leaders		
Back-to-School Block Party (10:00 AM-2:00 PM)	Proposed Executive Director Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Assistant Principal of Scholar Access Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement Community Engagement Task Force Teachers, Staff, and School Leaders	Host Back-to-School Block Party to engage founding scholars families in activities and backfill open seats should there be vacancies; distribute scholars uniforms.	August 1, 2026

Section 1.5 g: Describe student recruitment after the proposed school has opened. Detail how ongoing recruitment will differ from pre-opening recruitment.

The recruitment and marketing strategies for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will evolve over time to meet the needs of both pre-opening and post-opening phases, ensuring the school maintains robust enrollment and remains deeply embedded in the community. In Year 0, recruitment efforts will focus on introducing Novus SMART Academy to the community and building trust with prospective families. This will require the collaboration of the Proposed Executive Director, Founding Board Members, and key Year 0 staff, including the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance (hired in January 2026), the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access (hired in April 2026), and the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement (hired in April 2026). Together, these stakeholders will prioritize personal connections to the community, ensuring families feel valued and informed about the school's mission, model, and benefits.

Post-Opening Recruitment (Ongoing Enrollment). *Once Novus SMART Academy has opened its doors, recruitment efforts will shift from building initial awareness to maintaining a steady pipeline of interested families while fostering a sense of loyalty and pride among existing scholars and parents.*

Key Differences in Ongoing Recruitment

- **Retention-Focused Engagement:** Recruitment will include strategies to ensure high re-enrollment rates, such as maintaining a strong school culture, hosting parent appreciation events, and conducting regular satisfaction surveys to address concerns proactively.
- **Year-Round Recruitment:** Unlike the concentrated campaigns of the pre-opening phase, ongoing recruitment will be a continuous process, with specific pushes during key enrollment periods.
- **Word-of-Mouth Advocacy:** The school will empower current families to act as ambassadors by establishing referral programs, sharing testimonials, and celebrating scholar achievements in newsletters and social media posts.
- **Community Events:** Novus SMART Academy will continue to host events, such as academic showcases, schoolwide celebrations, and open houses, inviting prospective families to see the school in action.

Section 1.5 - Recruitment and Enrollment
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Alumni and Scholar Success Stories:** As scholars advance through the grades, the school will share their achievements to reinforce the value of the Novus SMART Academy model.
- **Targeted Outreach:** Focused efforts to attract specific populations, such as multilingual families or those with unique educational needs, will reflect the school's commitment to support all students.

Section 1.5 h: Describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the proposed school. Specifically describe any plans for outreach to economically disadvantaged15 families, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English learners, and other students at risk of academic failure.

Equal Access to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Our mission is rooted in providing a high-quality educational experience for all scholars. As a public charter school with open enrollment, we are committed to ensuring that every family and scholar has an equal opportunity to access our high-quality academic programs. Our approach includes comprehensive outreach, strategic marketing, and communication, all designed to reach and support economically disadvantaged families, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English learners, and other scholars at risk of academic failure.

Outreach Plan. To meet the needs of our diverse community, our recruitment efforts are primarily focused on the La Vergne and Smyrna communities, which are home to many underserved families. We have developed targeted outreach strategies, including partnerships with local apartment complexes, early childhood education centers, community organizations, and daycares. Since January 2024, our Proposed Executive Director has volunteered at the Smyrna Boys and Girls Club, providing tutoring and homework assistance, furthering our commitment to community service and direct engagement with families. These partnerships will allow us to host family informational sessions to introduce families to our school model and mission.

Through collaboration with Tennesseans for Student Success, we identified 600 families in La Vergne and Smyrna with children between the ages of 4-7 and high (80-100) scores for both School Switch and School Choice as potential founding scholars and families for Year 1. This data provides a foundation for our recruitment efforts and helps us foster lasting relationships within the community. Additionally, we are conducting family and community connection surveys to better understand the unique needs and aspirations of our prospective scholars and their families.

Strategic Marketing. Our marketing efforts prioritize access for all scholars, with specific strategies to support students at risk of academic failure. We will provide free informal assessments, such as reading inventories and Kindergarten readiness tests, to identify and support scholars who may benefit from additional academic intervention. We will also offer research-based workshops and materials to empower families with strategies to support learning at home. Our goal is to host a two-week summer camp in June 2026 through partnerships with local community centers and organizations. For English learners, we are building partnerships with community organizations that serve multilingual families. Our recruitment materials and events are conducted in both English and Spanish to ensure accessibility, and we will continue to use other languages as we see more demand.

Communication. We aim to create a school community that reflects the needs in La Vergne and Smyrna, where 37% of student-based residents are White, 23% are Black, 30% are Hispanic, and 10% identify as two or more races. We will publish bilingual recruitment materials and maintaining a strong social media presence on platforms such as Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NovusSMARTAcademyK8?mibextid=LQQJ4d, Instagram: https://instagram.com/novus_smart_academy_k8?utm_source=qr, and LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/novus-smart-academy-k-8-3a102429a/; hosting a school website: https://www.novussmartacademy.org/; hosting monthly events in high-traffic public areas and engaging directly with families through door-to-door canvassing, town halls, and informational sessions; and partnering with local churches and community leaders to expand our outreach and strengthen trust within the community.

Post-Opening Recruitment. Once Novus SMART Academy (K-8) opens, our recruitment efforts will expand to include in-person visits to the school, allowing prospective families to experience our classrooms, observe lessons, and attend events such as college and career nights. We will also host "A Day in the Life" sessions, where potential scholars can participate in literacy and math activities to experience our innovative academic model.

Commitment to Inclusion. Our academic model is intentionally designed to support diverse learners. With a two-educator model in K-5 classrooms and specialized inclusion classrooms featuring a three-educator setup, we will provide small group instruction tailored to meet the needs of all scholars, including those with disabilities and English learners. This approach ensures every child receives the personalized attention needed to succeed academically.

Sustaining Community Engagement. Building strong, lasting relationships with families and community members is central to our mission. We will continue to attend local events, partner with community stakeholders, and gather data to refine our strategies. By maintaining a waitlist of at least 50%, we ensure every scholar has an opportunity to benefit from the exceptional learning environment at Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Table 1: Enrollment Summary (Required for All Sponsors)

Student Enrollment Growth Over Years of Operation

Year of Operation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Full Capacity
Pre-K	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4	K-5	K-6	K-7	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
K	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	192
1	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	
2		96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	288
3			96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	384
4				96	96	96	96	96	96	96	480
5					96	96	96	96	96	96	576
6						96	96	96	96	96	672
7							96	96	96	96	768
8								96	96	96	864
9											
10											
11											
12											

Table 2: Anticipated Demographics (Required for All Sponsors)

Note: These data are available from the TN State Report Card	Estimated % within Proposed School	Current % within Nearest Public School Serving the Same Grade Band *(Applicable only If sponsor has identified a location for the proposed school)*
% of Economically Disadvantaged Students	70%	22%
% of Students with Disabilities	25%	9%
% of English Learners	35%	30%

Table 3: Anticipated Demographics (Required for Sponsors that indicated "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 8)

	Estimated % within Proposed School
% of At-Risk students[11]	N/A

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.6a: Describe community feedback and parental interest regarding the proposed charter school. Explain how this feedback was collected and provide a rationale for its validity. Detail how this feedback was incorporated into the application.

The Tennessee Department of Education Report Card data show that Rutherford County Schools is outperforming the state of Tennessee in math proficiency (44.9% versus 36.4% statewide) and in ELA proficiency (48.8% versus 38.8% statewide), and the graduation rate is 96.2% (versus the 90.6% statewide rate). However, on average, 72.53% of scholars in La Vergne and Smyrna are performing below the statewide average in math (in all 3 high schools), and 55.23% of scholars perform below the statewide average in ELA (two of the high schools). Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is aligned to Rutherford County Schools' strategic priority to provide early interventions that address scholars' academic needs and support the whole child. We see an opportunity to provide high-quality academic instruction with extended time and blended learning in literacy and math using a strategic two-educator classroom model, to respond to the gap between high-achieving and low-achieving scholars in this community, beginning in Kindergarten.

Additionally, because hundreds of scholars in Rutherford County will likely change schools over the next couple of years, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) sees an opportunity to partner with Rutherford County Schools to provide an additional school option for scholars and families. Although Rutherford County Schools' rezoning plan may allow schools to transition most scholars from portable into brick-and-mortar buildings, uprooting scholars from their current schools may not be feasible for all families.

Since August 2023, the Proposed Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has engaged extensively with the Rutherford County community to gather feedback and assess parental interest in the school. These efforts included in-person conversations, phone calls, virtual meetings, emails, social media outreach, and surveys. This multi-faceted approach ensured that a broad spectrum of voices informed the development of the academy's mission, vision, and educational model.

Feedback Collection and Rationale for Validity. Community input was gathered directly from families, teachers, school leaders, and local stakeholders. Examples of methods used include:

- **Direct Engagement**: Families shared their feedback during phone conversations with the Proposed Executive Director, providing candid insights into their educational needs and expectations.
- **Letters of Support**: At least one community member wrote a detailed letter supporting the establishment of a charter school in the area.
- **Surveys and Petitions**: Signatures of support were collected through both online and paper petitions, ensuring a quantifiable measure of community interest.
- **Personal Testimonies**: Parents provided verbatim feedback, which highlighted specific challenges with current educational options and expressed enthusiasm for the potential impact of Novus SMART Academy.

These methods ensure the validity of the feedback by encompassing diverse perspectives, directly involving community members, and utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data.

Key Themes from Community Feedback. Parent A stated, "Bringing a charter school to the La Vergne and Smyrna area is an excellent choice for our children. This would only provide a positive impact on not only the children and families but also the city for allowing more opportunities, opportunities that other cities currently have. Every family should be provided with options for schooling without paying thousands of dollars a year for an education. With the current overcrowding children are not getting the education that they so desire and need. The child to teacher ratio makes learning very difficult in turn causing behavior issues for children that need more one on one attention, a charter could provide this as well as specialized learning in more creative ways. The standard curriculum works for a large majority of children but certainly not all children. All children should be provided learning to fit their needs whether it be in a book or more hands on, public school does not allow much room for this. I have a high school student that does well in public school, but my other children would have benefited had we had Novus. Many situations show that charter schools run like private schools, many children are denied access for lower grades, financial situations, etc. Putting a charter school and more specifically Novus in La Vergne and Smyrna will open doors for children that otherwise would not have an opportunity to attend a more specialized school. Not all children learn the same, not all children learn as quickly as others or with chaos around them, take these children out and put them in Novus and you will see an average or even below average student rise to the top! I truly hope that you put the children first when deciding on Novus, our kids are our future so without proper education in the beginning can you imagine our future."

Parent B shared, "I've been trying to get my child in Thurman Francis for years, but we are always denied every year. My child meets all the qualifications to get in, but there are no available spaces. Our only other option is Smyrna Middle School, and I am not in the space to pay for private school. Although my child will not be able to attend this school, I wish you had another middle school my child could go to now that is better suited for my child."

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

Parent C stated, “I live in this community, but my children go to a school outside the county. We live in walking-distance to all their schools near my house, but I do not trust them. I feel they are not learning anything, and I need my children to have great options for college. I would love for you to speak to them and their friends, other kids in the neighborhood, about their experiences in school and this community. This will be a blessing to this community. We need something better.”

Parent D stated “My daughter is Nyla and she is 3 years old. By the time this Academy opens she will be able to attend this school. She is biracial and that's all I think about is how to prepare her for what she will run into when she starts school. With the vision of this school, it eases my worries a little. Knowing they are looking to support little brown children has my vote.”

Overcrowded Schools: Parents expressed concerns about overcrowded classrooms, which hinder effective learning and individualized attention. They believe Novus SMART Academy could address these challenges by offering smaller class sizes and specialized instruction.

Limited Access to High-Quality Education: Families highlighted the lack of accessible, high-quality educational options in the area. For instance, Parent B described repeated denial of access to a magnet school and the absence of affordable alternatives.

Desire for Specialized Learning: Several parents emphasized the need for education tailored to diverse learning styles, with Parent A noting the limitations of a standard curriculum and the potential of Novus to unlock students’ full potential.

Trust in Local Schools: Parent C’s feedback underscored distrust in existing local schools, leading them to send their children to schools outside the county.

Incorporation into the Application. Community feedback has directly influenced the design and description of Novus SMART Academy’s educational model, as detailed in the application. Examples include:

- **Smaller Class Sizes:** The school design incorporates smaller teacher-to-student ratios to address the challenges of overcrowding.
- **Curricula Resources:** The proposed curriculum reflects a commitment to meeting the needs of all learners, incorporating creative and hands-on approaches tailored to different learning styles.
- **Community-Centered Vision:** The application emphasizes Novus SMART Academy’s dedication to serving as a transformative educational option for Rutherford County families, particularly in underserved areas like La Vergne and Smyrna.

Evidence of Community Support. Support for Novus SMART Academy is further validated by the substantial number of signatures collected through online and paper petitions, representing families, scholars, and community members who see the school as a much-needed addition to Rutherford County.

Section 1.6b: Describe planned strategies to engage parents and community members from school approval through its operation. Detail strategies to establish buy-in and interest from the community during the pre-opening period.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to establishing robust engagement strategies that foster strong relationships with parents, families, and community members from the school’s approval phase through its operation. These strategies aim to build trust, excitement, and sustained buy-in from the community as we prepare to launch in August 2026.

Informational Sessions and Community Events. Novus SMART Academy will host monthly targeted informational sessions and community events post-authorization from May 2025 to July 2026. Each session will serve as an opportunity to share our mission, vision, and core values; articulate our high academic and character expectations for scholars; provide an interactive platform for families to ask questions and engage directly with our Proposed Executive Director, Founding Board, and Year 0 staff members; and celebrate milestones toward the school’s opening and share updates on the progress of facility development, hiring, and enrollment efforts. These events will feature engaging activities for children, ensuring that families feel welcomed and supported as potential partners in their scholars’ educational journey.

Building Relationships with Early Childhood Centers. *Our Proposed Executive Director and Founding Board have conducted extensive research to identify preschools and early childhood facilities within the targeted community. To date, introductions have been made and conversations initiated with directors of over 30 of these facilities to build trust and establish collaborative relationships, present Novus SMART Academy as a high-quality option for scholars transitioning to Kindergarten, and to develop partnership opportunities such as co-hosted events, parent workshops, and shared resources. This outreach will continue through Year 0, with the goal of solidifying long-term partnerships that benefit both families and the broader community.*

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

Recruitment Strategies. To ensure robust enrollment for Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director, Founding Board, and Year 0 staff will implement a variety of outreach activities, including:

- **Canvassing Events:** Organized community walks to share school information, answer questions, and distribute enrollment materials directly to families.
- **Tabling Events:** Participating in local festivals, farmers' markets, and community events to increase visibility and engagement.
- **Information Sessions and Town Hall Meetings:** Partnering with community organizations and local leaders to host forums that provide deeper insights into our school model.
- **Print and Digital Media Campaigns:** Monthly newsletters, multilingual print materials, social media campaigns, website updates, and radio advertisements will be used to communicate with a diverse audience.

Staffing for Engagement. Year 0 hires will play pivotal roles in ensuring community engagement remains a top priority. Key staff include:

- **Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance** (starting January 2026): Supporting operational logistics and enrollment processes.
- **Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement** (starting April 2026): Leading community outreach, parent engagement, and scholar recruitment efforts.
- **Assistant Principal of Scholar Access** (starting April 2026): Collaborating with families to support seamless transitions into the school community.

Rolling Recruitment and Intent-to-Enroll Forms. During Year 0 (2025-2026), we will leverage partnerships and outreach activities to collect Intent-to-Enroll forms on a rolling basis. This approach allows us to continuously assess and refine recruitment strategies, meet enrollment projections with a goal of securing 150% applications for Year 1 enrollment, and maintain a healthy waitlist to ensure strong enrollment numbers on Day 1. The Community Engagement Task Force, led by our Proposed Executive Director and key Founding Board Members, will work tirelessly to track progress and adapt strategies as needed to achieve these ambitious goals.

Long-Term Community Partnerships. Our commitment to building strong and lasting community partnerships extends beyond the pre-opening period. Our Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will establish our Family Advisory Council and Engagement (FACE of Novus) to ensure families have presence and a voice in shaping school policies and initiatives. We will create ongoing opportunities for parents and community members to volunteer, contribute feedback, and participate in school activities. We will also collaborate with local businesses, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits to enhance resources and opportunities for our scholars and families.
Through these deliberate and sustained efforts, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will establish itself as a trusted, high-quality educational option that reflects and serves the needs of our community.

Section 1.6c: Provide any of the following documents that show support from the proposed school's targeted community as Attachment D:

- **Outreach communications intended for the families of potential students.**
- **Documentation of parental intent to enroll their children in the proposed school.**
- **Memoranda of understanding that shows the community welcomes the proposed school, sees it as an attractive educational option, and believes it meets local needs and interests.**
- **Letters of support from the local community that clearly express commitment to the proposed school and suggest that such support will ensure that the school will meet its enrollment goals. These letters may also confirm financial support or ongoing community engagement.**

See Attachment D: Click Here

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.6d: Outline partnerships with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of these partnerships, including any fee-based or in-kind commitments to enhance student learning opportunities.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement a strategic recruitment and marketing plan through trusting and lasting partnerships, as outlined in Figure 28.

Figure 28 - Implementing Recruitment and Marketing Strategies

Organization	Mission/Vision	Alignment to Novus SMART Academy & Partnership Purpose
100 Black Men Middle Tennessee Region	Our mission is to nurture and enhance the growth, development and opportunities for young black males of Middle Tennessee.	The partnership with 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee will be structured to support Novus SMART Academy's mission of fostering global achievers through academic excellence, character building, and ambition. Nature of the Partnership. We will focus on mentorship, academic enrichment, and life skills development. The collaboration will leverage 100 BMMT's community resources and proven programming, such as the 100 Kings program, to enhance educational opportunities for students and families. Purposes of the Partnership. Mentorship will provide students, especially young male scholars, with role models who embody the values of leadership, resilience, and academic success. Offer academic enrichment programs, workshops, and tutoring sessions that support STEM, literacy, and character development. Introduce opportunities for scholars to develop leadership, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills through structured activities and mentorship. Provide parent-focused workshops or resources to foster family involvement in student success. Introduce scholars to diverse career pathways through industry guest speakers, job shadowing, and career readiness workshops. Terms of the Partnership. 100 BMMT will deliver components of its 100 Kings Program tailored to fit the needs of Novus SMART Academy scholars, focusing on academic tutoring, STEM education, character and leadership development, and college and career exploration. Volunteer Commitment: 100 BMMT will recruit and schedule mentors who align with the values and mission of both organizations. These mentors will commit to consistent involvement, ensuring continuity and relationship building with scholars. Shared Events. Collaborate on events such as back-to-school drives, literacy nights, STEM fairs, and leadership summits. Reporting and Feedback. Regular check-ins and progress reports to ensure program impact and alignment with Novus SMART Academy goals.

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		In-Kind Commitments. 100 BMMT will provide mentoring services, workshop facilitation, and access to the 100 Kings curriculum at no cost on Saturdays. Families will be responsible for transportation to and from the facilities that will be designated by 100 BMMT. Scholar Incentives. Include recognition programs, small scholarships, and awards for academic improvement or leadership growth to motivate scholars. In-Kind Contributions from 100 BMMT. • Mentorship Resources: Volunteer mentors, trained facilitators, and role models for workshops and one-on-one mentorship. • Program Materials: Access to materials, including the 100 Kings curriculum, leadership guides, and STEM kits. • Event Support: Speakers, facilitators, and logistical support for co-branded events. • Community Networks: Connections to local businesses and community leaders for career exploration activities. Expected Outcomes • Improved academic performance and STEM literacy for scholars. • Enhanced student leadership and confidence through mentorship. • Increased parental engagement in scholar development. • Stronger community ties between Novus SMART Academy and 100BMOT. See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Amazing Leaders Child Care La Vergne	Amazing Leaders Child Care provides nurturing child care ages 1 year to 5 years. We also provide care for school-aged children up to 12 years for before and after care. We work hard to ensure the safety of your little one to reach their full potential through play, learning and exploring. We teach educational skills to prepare them for elementary school.	These partnerships are established to support early childhood education and transition readiness for students entering Kindergarten at Novus SMART Academy. We will collaborate to ensure children enrolled are prepared academically, socially, and emotionally for the rigorous learning environment. Purposes of the Partnership. We will partner with early childhood facilities to provide foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development. We will build a bridge to foster trust and awareness of our mission and programs. We will also support students and families in successfully transitioning to our school through targeted communication, resources, and readiness events. We will also provide students with exposure to our innovative curriculum approach, emphasizing college and career exploration and character education. Terms of the Partnership. We will provide weekly virtual informational sessions for families about
Aunty K's Child Care Center La Vergne Murfreesboro	As a homegrown operation, Aunty K's Child Care Center, LLC originally began in 2011 and later expanded to two centers in La Vergne and Murfreesboro, TN. With over 15 years of experience, we are dedicated to providing compassionate and educational care in a safe and welcoming environment. With an emphasis on growth through hands-on learning, we incorporate love and fun into everything we do.	
Big Hearts Little Hands Child Care and Early Learning Center	At Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center, our mission is to provide a solid foundation that ensures your child will reach his or her full potential and is ready for	

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

Smyrna	school and ready for life. We treat children of all races, religions, family backgrounds, and cultures with equal respect and consideration.	our school and enrollment, readiness workshops, and academic offerings. We will host events and allow representatives to engage with families at its center. Student Enrichment Opportunities. We will organize in-class activities and workshops for students (e.g., STEM-focused learning experiences, read-aloud sessions, and/or character-building lessons). These students and families will also have priority access to our application and enrollment initiatives. Scope of In-Kind Commitments. Provide meeting space for our outreach events and workshops at no cost. Share communication materials (e.g., newsletters, flyers) from NSA with families. Host staff for in-class engagement opportunities and community-building events. From Novus SMART Academy. Deliver training and resource materials to staff to enhance instructional quality. Provide workshops and readiness materials for families. Offer participation in events at no cost to students and families. Duration of Partnership. The initial partnership agreement will be ongoing effective January 2024 from and will continue by mutual consent. Partnership Evaluation. Parties will evaluate the partnership's success quarterly through meetings to discuss engagement levels, student outcomes, and family feedback. Adjustments will be made as needed to ensure alignment with the mission and goals of each organization.
Early Learning Adventures at Jaymes Academy Smyrna	We are a community child care center based in Smyrna. We care for children from 6 weeks to 12 years old and provide a range of age-appropriate resources and activities to encourage their development right up until they are ready to join kindergarten.	
Gingerbread House Child Care Center Smyrna	The Gingerbread House CLC is committed to providing your child with quality care by encouraging each child to express themselves through language, art, music, and physical activity. With the emphasis on learning through play, they are gaining knowledge and building socialization as well as self help skills that build up their self esteem, which is needed to succeed in all areas of life.	
Kiddies Kollege Learning Center Smyrna	Preparing our Kiddies for Kollege.	
La Petite Academy Smyrna	We provide strong social and educational foundations that prepare your child for success in elementary school and beyond. Our schools and classrooms are designed to give children room to grow, room to share, and room to be themselves. Here, children work together, have constructive fun together, and discover how enjoyable learning can be.	
Learning Zone Smyrna	Learning Zone Child Care is one of the most unique preschools and daycares in Murfreesboro and Nashville, TN. We are a child development center dedicated to a fun filled learning experience during the early years. We serve families with children 6 weeks to five years of age. We believe in providing quality care and education during these critical years of development.	

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
Little Journey Preschool La Vergne	Our mission is to equip our students with a strong educational foundation for success in kindergarten and beyond.	
Little Miracles Smyrna	Little Miracles is committed to providing your child with quality care by encouraging each child to express themselves through language, art, music, and physical activity. With the emphasis on learning through play, they are gaining knowledge and building socialization as well as self-help skills that build up their self-esteem, which is needed to succeed in all areas of life.	
Mid-Cumberland Head Start Smyrna	We empower children and families to reach their potential now and throughout life.	
Ms. Kimberly's Playground La Vergne	A place where children love to play.	
Ms. Nichole's, Inc. Smyrna	We strive for quality and safety. One of our many focal points is making the lives of parents/guardians a fragment easier. The challenge of working all day and coming home to find that your day has just begun can be tiresome. We are committed to helping children complete their homework correctly, exercise in a way that is enjoyable and stimulating, try and experiment with a healthy choice of snack and let's not forget the basics of just having some fun!	
New Hope Learning Center & Lily's Playhouse and Preschool Smyrna	Peace of mind is the way a parent feels when they know their child is in an environment with people they can trust.	
Tots' Spot Academy La Vergne	Our mission is to provide a safe and loving environment where children will be free to learn and flourish. For every child to feel special and know that there is only one "them".	
Carpe Artista Smyrna	Carpe Artista provides artistic training, leadership development and community engagement opportunities for artists in Smyrna, North Rutherford County, and surrounding areas. We create and manage a wide range of art related classes, events, performances and camps for local residents of all ages, interests and skill levels. Carpe Artista achieves our mission through the strict	The partnership between Novus SMART Academy and Carpe Artista is a collaborative effort to enhance student learning opportunities through arts education, creative programming, and enrichment activities. This partnership aligns with the mission of both organizations to inspire and empower students through innovative, high-quality education.

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
	adherence to our four core values of character, calling, craft and community.	Purpose of the Partnership. The partnership aims to provide Novus SMART Academy students with access to arts and creative programs that foster critical thinking, creativity, and emotional intelligence; integrate arts into the academic curriculum, supporting the holistic development of scholars; and offer Carpe Artista an opportunity to impact the local community by nurturing the next generation of artists, musicians, and creative thinkers. Scope of Partnership Activities. Carpe Artista will deliver arts-based workshops, classes, and interactive sessions for Novus SMART Academy students; provide professional development for teachers, equipping them with skills to integrate arts into classroom instruction; and organize periodic student showcases, such as art exhibitions, music recitals, or theatrical performances, to celebrate student creativity. Novus SMART Academy will facilitate on-campus space and scheduling for Carpe Artista programs; integrate Carpe Artista programming into the academic calendar and curriculum where appropriate; and support the communication and promotion of partnership activities to the school community. In-Kind Commitments. Carpe Artista commits to providing expert instructors for student programs at no or minimal cost to Novus SMART Academy; access to Carpe Artista facilities and resources for specific programs or events; art supplies, instruments, or materials for workshops, subject to availability. Novus SMART Academy commits to providing a dedicated liaison to coordinate partnership activities and facilitate seamless communication; logistical support for off-campus programs, if applicable; and volunteer or staff assistance during events and workshops as needed. Terms of Partnership. The partnership will commence once the school is authorized and will be reviewed annually to assess progress and refine goals. Both parties agree to meet quarterly to evaluate program effectiveness and adjust plans as needed. Either party may terminate the agreement with a 60-day written notice. Mutual Goals and Outcomes. Increase student exposure to the arts, contributing to well-rounded personal and academic growth. Develop measurable outcomes to assess the impact of arts education, such as student participation rates, parent satisfaction, and program feedback. Build a sustainable model for integrating arts into Novus SMART Academy's long-term educational framework.

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Center for the Arts Murfreesboro	The mission of the Center for the Arts is to enhance the quality of life in our community.	Creative Enrichment for Scholars. Arts-based learning can support Novus SMART Academy's goal of producing global achievers by integrating creativity into academic instruction. Character & Leadership Development. The Center for the Arts' focus on asset-based learning aligns with Novus SMART Academy's emphasis on strong character and ambition for success. Community Engagement & Visibility. Collaborating with an established arts institution can provide opportunities for outreach, increasing awareness and enrollment efforts. Potential Extracurricular & Enrichment Programs – A partnership could lead to arts-integrated workshops, after-school programs, or performances that enhance student learning beyond the classroom.
Discovery Center Murfreesboro	Our vision is to build a community with the courage to ask thoughtful questions, the drive to find creative solutions, and the confidence to implement positive changes.	Novus SMART Academy and the Discovery Center share a common vision of cultivating young minds that are curious, solutions-oriented, and prepared to make a meaningful impact on their communities. The Discovery Center's commitment to fostering critical thinking through project-based learning aligns seamlessly with Novus SMART Academy's mission to develop global achievers through high-quality instruction, strong character development, and a relentless ambition for success. Through this partnership, scholars at Novus SMART Academy will have opportunities to engage in hands-on, inquiry-driven learning experiences that deepen their understanding of academic concepts while nurturing their problem-solving skills. The Discovery Center's emphasis on asking thoughtful questions and seeking creative solutions mirrors the Academy's approach to preparing students for both college and career, beginning in Kindergarten. By integrating project-based learning into the school's curriculum, this collaboration will empower students to think critically, work collaboratively, and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts. Beyond the classroom, the Discovery Center can serve as an extension of the learning environment, offering enriching field trips, interactive exhibits, and STEM-focused programming that bring lessons to life. This partnership also presents opportunities for community engagement, allowing

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		families and educators to participate in events and initiatives that strengthen both organizations' presence and impact. Professional development opportunities through the Discovery Center can equip Novus SMART Academy educators with innovative strategies for fostering inquiry-based learning in their classrooms. Together, Novus SMART Academy and the Discovery Center can create a dynamic educational experience that inspires young learners to explore, question, and discover, ensuring they are well-equipped to become confident, solutions-oriented leaders of the future.
Middle Tennessee State University Murfreesboro	Middle Tennessee State University takes pride in its role as a comprehensive, diverse, and innovative institution whose distinctive bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral programs prepare graduates to thrive in their chosen professions and a changing global society. Students, faculty, and staff generate, preserve, and disseminate knowledge and collaboratively promote excellence through teaching and learning, research, creative activity, and public engagement.	Novus SMART Academy and Middle Tennessee State University share a commitment to preparing students for success in an ever-evolving global society. As a comprehensive and innovative institution, MTSU provides students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to thrive in their chosen careers. This aligns with Novus SMART Academy's mission to lay the foundation for college and career readiness starting in Kindergarten, ensuring that young scholars develop the academic excellence, character, and ambition needed to achieve their goals. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy scholars will gain exposure to higher education pathways, fostering early aspirations for academic achievement and professional success. Opportunities for engagement with MTSU faculty, students, and programs can provide invaluable mentorship and hands-on learning experiences that reinforce the importance of higher education and career exploration. Collaborative initiatives such as campus visits, guest lectures, and project-based learning experiences will allow scholars to connect classroom instruction with real-world applications, broadening their understanding of future opportunities. Additionally, this partnership creates a bridge between K-12 education and higher education by supporting Novus SMART Academy educators with research-based best practices, professional development, and innovative teaching strategies. MTSU's commitment to public engagement and community development further strengthens this collaboration by reinforcing the importance of education as a driving force for local and regional growth. By working together, Novus SMART Academy and Middle Tennessee State University will create a seamless pipeline of academic excellence, ensuring that students have access to the resources, support, and inspiration needed to

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		pursue fulfilling careers that contribute to the advancement of their community.
Motlow State Community College Smyrna	Motlow State Community College is a public, multi-campus college offering certificates, associate degrees, and flexible learning pathways for early transfer, college preparation, and workforce training. Students are prepared for employment, career advancement, and a four-year college or university transfer. The College serves an eleven-county area comprised of full-time, part-time, traditional, and non-traditional age students from diverse socio-economic populations with disparate backgrounds. The College offers high quality accredited academic programs and various support services emphasizing and promoting student success.	Novus SMART Academy and Motlow State Community College share a vision of empowering students with the knowledge, skills, and pathways needed for academic and professional success. As a public, multi-campus institution, Motlow State provides a flexible and accessible foundation for students pursuing certificates, associate degrees, and workforce training, ensuring they are well-prepared for career advancement or transfer to a four-year university. This aligns seamlessly with Novus SMART Academy's mission to build a strong educational foundation for young scholars, instilling in them the ambition, academic excellence, and character needed to excel in college and beyond. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy scholars will benefit from early exposure to college and career opportunities, fostering a culture of high expectations and achievement from an early age. Engaging with Motlow State's faculty, students, and career development programs will provide real-world learning experiences that connect classroom instruction to future aspirations. College visits, mentorship programs, and hands-on learning opportunities will help students understand the diverse pathways available to them, reinforcing the idea that success is achievable through dedication and preparation. Additionally, this collaboration can extend to Novus SMART Academy educators, offering access to professional development, research-based instructional strategies, and innovative teaching methodologies that enhance student learning. As Motlow State serves a diverse student population across an eleven-county region, its commitment to accessibility and student success makes it an ideal partner in supporting Novus SMART Academy's goal of producing well-rounded, future-ready scholars. By working together, Novus SMART Academy and Motlow State Community College will create a bridge between early childhood education and higher education, ensuring that students have the resources, support, and preparation needed to pursue meaningful careers that contribute to the growth and prosperity of their communities.
Murfreesboro Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	We advocate, connect, inform, and fight for business growth and America's success.	Novus SMART Academy and the Murfreesboro Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce share a commitment to fostering growth, opportunity, and success within the community. As an organization dedicated to advocacy, connection, and business development, the Chamber plays a vital role in supporting local organizations as they expand their impact and serve their stakeholders. This

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		aligns with Novus SMART Academy's mission to develop young scholars into global achievers by providing a high-quality educational foundation rooted in academic excellence, character development, and ambition. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy will have the opportunity to strengthen its community presence, build meaningful relationships with families, and engage with local businesses that value education as a key driver of economic growth. The Chamber's resources and network will provide strategic support for the Academy's organizational development, helping to ensure long-term sustainability and community integration. Collaborative efforts can include outreach initiatives, business engagement opportunities, and networking events that amplify Novus SMART Academy's mission while fostering deeper connections with the diverse families and businesses in the area. Additionally, this partnership can create pathways for student enrichment by introducing young scholars to entrepreneurship, leadership development, and civic engagement. By connecting Novus SMART Academy with business leaders and professionals, students will gain exposure to real-world applications of learning, reinforcing the importance of education in shaping future opportunities. Together, Novus SMART Academy and the Murfreesboro Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will work to build a thriving community where education and business intersect to create lasting success for students, families, and the broader region.
North Rutherford Family YMCA Smyrna	A worldwide charitable fellowship united by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ for the purpose of helping people grow in spirit, mind and body.	Novus SMART Academy and the North Rutherford Family YMCA share a deep commitment to developing the whole child—mind, body, and spirit—through education, character-building, and community engagement. As a global organization dedicated to strengthening individuals and families, the YMCA fosters personal growth and social responsibility, which aligns with Novus SMART Academy's mission to cultivate scholars with strong character, academic excellence, and an ambition for lifelong success. Through this partnership, scholars at Novus SMART Academy will have opportunities to engage in asset-based learning experiences that encourage leadership, teamwork, and resilience. Community service projects, wellness initiatives, and enrichment activities will help students develop a sense of responsibility, empathy, and perseverance—essential qualities for success in both school and life. The YMCA's commitment to holistic development will complement Novus SMART Academy's rigorous academic approach,

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
		ensuring that students not only excel in the classroom but also grow into well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities. This collaboration also offers families and educators meaningful ways to connect, reinforcing a shared vision of nurturing young minds and strengthening the broader community. Programs focused on physical fitness, mental well-being, and social-emotional learning will support the Academy's goal of preparing scholars to become confident, purpose-driven leaders. Together, Novus SMART Academy and the North Rutherford Family YMCA will create an environment where students are empowered to grow, thrive, and make a lasting impact—both within their school and in the world around them.
Rotary Club Smyrna	The Rotary Club is a worldwide group of business leaders, community leaders and individuals who believe in delivering compassionate service benefitting our fellow humans throughout the world.	Novus SMART Academy and the Rotary Club of Smyrna share a dedication to service, leadership, and community impact. As a global network of business and community leaders committed to making a difference, the Rotary Club aligns with the Academy's mission to develop scholars with strong character, academic excellence, and a relentless ambition to succeed. Together, they can create opportunities that inspire young minds to embrace the values of leadership, service, and lifelong learning. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy scholars can engage in service-learning projects that cultivate empathy, responsibility, and civic engagement. By participating in mentorship programs, leadership development initiatives, and community service activities, students will gain firsthand experience in what it means to serve others and create meaningful change. The Rotary Club's commitment to fostering ethical leadership and global citizenship will reinforce the Academy's focus on developing scholars who are prepared to make a positive impact beyond the classroom. Additionally, the partnership offers a bridge between education and the business community, connecting Novus SMART Academy with professionals who can provide career exploration, networking opportunities, and real-world insights that inspire students to pursue their aspirations with confidence. Rotarians can serve as guest speakers, mentors, and advocates, helping to instill in young scholars the importance of integrity, perseverance, and service to others. By working together, Novus SMART Academy and the Rotary Club of Smyrna will cultivate the next generation of leaders—students who not only achieve academic success but also contribute to the well-being of their communities and the world.

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)		
Smyrna Boys and Girls Club	Boys & Girls Clubs work to save and change the lives of children and teens, especially those who need us most, by providing a safe, positive, and engaging environment and programs that prepare and inspire them to achieve great futures. We have three clubs in Murfreesboro, Shelbyville and Smyrna.	The Smyrna Boys & Girls Club and Novus SMART Academy share a common mission of empowering children and teens with the support, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Both organizations are committed to closing opportunity gaps for underserved youth by providing a safe, engaging, and enriching environment where students can develop the skills necessary for lifelong success. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy and the Smyrna Boys & Girls Club will collaborate to enhance student learning beyond the classroom, offering extended academic support, mentorship, and character-building programs. By aligning efforts, we aim to create a seamless bridge between school and afterschool programming, reinforcing positive behaviors, academic excellence, and leadership development. Together, we will ensure that students not only meet but exceed their potential, preparing them for high school, college, careers, and active participation in their communities.
Tennessee Robotics Center Murfreesboro	Our driving vision is to accelerate talent development for K-12 students in Technology, Robotics, and Computer Science (TRC), inspiring them to pursue careers and education in STEAM to become the future leaders in Science and Technology.	The Tennessee Robotics Center and Novus SMART Academy share a commitment to equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences necessary to excel in an increasingly technology-driven world. Both organizations emphasize the importance of STEAM education, critical thinking, and hands-on learning to prepare students for future careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy and the Tennessee Robotics Center will collaborate to provide students with access to advanced robotics, coding, and computer science programs that enhance their problem-solving abilities and foster innovation. By integrating project-based learning into the school's curriculum and extending opportunities beyond the classroom, this partnership will ensure that students develop the technical proficiency and analytical mindset needed to succeed in high school, college, and beyond. Together, we are shaping the next generation of leaders, empowering them to be creators and innovators in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

In accordance with T. C. A. § 49-13-109, we will ensure that our Board of Directors adds at least one parent representative whose scholars is currently enrolled at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) within six months of operation. Our Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement (FACE of Novus) will form our Family Advisory Council and Engagement to include the Proposed Executive Director, the parent representative (who will serve as Chair of the Council), at least one teacher per grade level, and at least two parents/guardians per grade level. The Council will meet at a minimum of once per quarter, and as often as once per month.

The primary purpose of FACE of Novus is to engage families of the school, create opportunities for families to be engaged often at the school, launch annual listening campaigns wherein the council actively seeks the input of families, and find ways to support and encourage the teachers in our school. The FACE of Novus Chair will present family satisfactions, suggestions, and/or feedback for improvement to the Board of Director following their meetings. We will use this information

Section 1.6 - Parent and Community Engagement and Support (Required for All Sponsors)

to review the effectiveness of our academics plan, school culture, and operations procedures. At minimum, we ask all families to commit to the following:

- Annually review, sign, and meet the expectations of our Scholar-Family-School Commitments.
- Share concerns and support school decisions and policies.
- Support scholars at home in completing lifework, reading assignments, and any other school-related tasks.
- Actively communicate with scholars regarding academic results and behavioral progress and communicate with the Council about concerns.
- Attend Noble Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences, and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning.
- Return phone calls from the school.
- Communicate scholars' needs and changes in behavior for the school to effectively partner in monitoring character development.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will inform and educate families about all school policies, commitments, and/or volunteer opportunities first through canvassing events and home visits. Aligned to purposes (6) in T.C.A. § 49-13-102(a), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will afford parents/guardians substantial meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. We are dedicated to empowering our scholars and families, and teachers and staff members, to break free from limiting beliefs by unlocking their true potential. We will foster a school community where all scholars thrive as changemakers, partnering together to model transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of greatness, and making a positive impact on the world.

Our families will have multiple opportunities to engage with our teachers, school leaders, and staff members throughout the school year at various school events including but not limited to College & Career Nights, learning expeditions (i.e., field trips), and schoolwide events and celebrations (i.e., National Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations, awards ceremonies, etc.). All families will attend summer orientation meetings before the start of the school year and will attend scholar-led conferences to learn more about their scholars' present level of performance throughout the school year.

In alignment with our Scholar-Family-School Commitments & Accountability document, which scholars and families will sign, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) expects our families to participate in their scholars' learning throughout the school year. Families may attend Noble College and Career Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences, and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning. Throughout the year, we will host activities such as Community Circle, service-learning projects and community service, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and Goodies for Grandparent's Day to engage our scholars and families. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will also host College and Career Nights several times throughout the school year. College and Career Nights will benefit families and community members in the following ways: (a) providing a chance for them to participate in learning activities and scholars' experiences, (b) disseminating information about high school preparation and supporting scholars' learning needs, (c) engaging community partners to assist families with expressed needs, (d) showcasing scholars' work, and (e) communicating schoolwide progress toward major goals. We will seek out community organizations, such as local high schools and colleges, nonprofit organizations, and other businesses to participate in our efforts to support the scholars and families in our school community. This effort aligns to our mission and vision of providing all scholars (and families and community members) access to resources that foster a love for learning, encourage innovation and creativity, and support personal growth so scholars may thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.7a: Provide as Attachment E the Student Handbook and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families.

See Attachment E: Click Here

Section 1.7b: Describe the desired school culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce the school's mission, goals, and objectives.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will promote a high-quality academic instructional environment that reinforces our school's mission and vision and is explicitly aligned to our core values. Our school ethos is driven by our mission and embedded in all our school's key design elements and encapsulated in our Noble Core Values: Academic Excellence, Beacon of Joy, Character Development, Habits for Humanity, and Intellectual Curiosity Figure 29). We are committed to fostering a positive school environment for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members so that every minute of the school day yields positive results. We know scholars and families deserve to attend schools that promote learning and achievement, pushing scholars towards their chosen college and career paths. We also understand that schools cannot have a high-quality academic instructional program without a strong school culture that includes high behavioral expectations.

To achieve Academic Excellence, we will collect and analyze data, use the data to plan and practice, teach and support, and model and monitor the character and high behavioral expectations we want to see in our scholars and families. We will reinforce our school culture expectations with research-based strategies that are scientifically proven to create high-performing schools with innovative practices. We will promote a high-quality academic environment and reinforce our mission through the following commitments: rigorous curricula, high-quality academic instruction, and character development.

Figure 29 - Noble Core Values' Meanings and Examples

Noble Core Value	Meaning	Example of Behavior in School
Academic Excellence	We believe our scholars and families deserve access to a high-quality academic educational experience that fosters a relentless drive for academic success, innovation, and personal growth. Through the implementation of rigorous curricula, our teachers, school leaders, and staff members aim to inspire and model a love for learning, critical thinking, and creativity. We are committed to creating a community of lifelong learners on their chosen college and career paths, striving for excellence in all aspects of life.	Lead with confidence through effort and determination, taking learning seriously to make an impact on the community.
Beacon of Joy	We emanate JOY as ripples of inspiration, fostering a positive school culture of belonging(ness), acceptance, and character development for our scholars and families, teachers and staff members, and members of our school community. We empower each other to discover our inner happiness, embrace our unique talents, and make a positive impact in our world, full of endless possibilities.	Mutual respect among scholars and adults and creating a safe space to celebrate the success of others in the classroom for their accomplishments.
Character Development	We provide our scholars and families, and teachers and staff members, with experiences that are transformational and ignite their personal growth and character development. We promote values that cultivate self-awareness through the development of essential life skills, leading to purposeful lives and positive impact on our communities for generations to come.	Give and receive meaningful feedback that supports the growth of all academically and socially.
Habits for Humanity	We are dedicated to empowering our scholars and families, and teachers and staff members to break free from limiting beliefs by unlocking their true potential. We foster a school community where all thrive as changemakers, partnering together to model transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of greatness, and making a positive impact on the world.	Embrace the individual talents of others, working together with a growth mindset to accomplish goals that impact self and others in a meaningful way.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline (Required for All Sponsors)		
Intellectual Curiosity	We believe in fostering rigorous learning experiences between our teachers and scholars as they question, discover, and pursue knowledge relentlessly. We strive to create a global community that celebrates the joy of learning, where curiosity is not only encouraged but cherished through high-quality academic instruction.	Pursue knowledge and interests through curiosity and the joy of learning without limitations.

As Beacons of Joy, we emanate JOY as ripples of inspiration, fostering a positive school culture of belonging, acceptance, and character development for our scholars and families, teachers and staff members, and members of our school community. We empower each other to discover our inner happiness, embrace our unique talents, and make a positive impact in our world, full of endless possibilities.

Through Character Development, we provide our scholars and families, and teachers and staff members, with experiences that are transformational and ignite their personal growth and character development. We promote values that cultivate self-awareness through the development of essential life skills, leading to purposeful lives and positive impact on our communities for generations to come. Through Habits for Humanity, we are dedicated to empowering our scholars and families, and teachers and staff members, to break free from limiting beliefs by unlocking their true potential. We foster a school community where all thrive as changemakers, partnering together to model transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of greatness, and making a positive impact on the world.

As proponents of Intellectual Curiosity, our teachers, school leaders, and staff members aim to inspire and model a love for learning, critical thinking, and creativity. We are committed to creating a community of lifelong learners on their chosen college and career paths, striving for excellence in all aspects of life. We believe in fostering collaborative learning experiences between our teachers and scholars as they question, discover, and pursue knowledge relentlessly with high-quality curricula. We strive to create a global community that celebrates the joy of learning, establishing an environment wherein curiosity is not only encouraged but cherished.

Section 1.7c: Describe the plan to create, implement, and sustain this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for integrating students who enter mid-year.

To establish, communicate, and maintain a positive school culture at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we will require attention to detail, pervasive modeling of values, and frequent reinforcement of goals and aims. Our efforts to meet this goal include adhering to the tenets of our character development program, providing a safe and structured environment for all, securing intervention and support for all scholars, and offering professional learning and development for teachers and school leaders.

Character Education. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) uses asset-based learning (ABL) in the arts/electives to support character development through team building and collaboration. We provide individualized academic and behavioral supports (MTSS-Academics/Behavior) in daily advisory lessons that are grade-level appropriate; in daily morning meetings to highlight school community innovations and inspirations; in weekly Community Circles and Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) sessions; and in weekly Noble Fest celebrations to recognize our Novus Nobles (extraordinary scholars, teachers and school leaders, and staff members who model our Noble Core Values). Our scholars will show up every day ready, responsible, and respectful in their pursuit of knowledge. These proactive approaches will help to mitigate challenging behaviors and equip scholars with the skills necessary to resolve internal and external challenges in every aspect of their lives.

Scholars need schoolwide and classroom structures and safety in the school environment to feel a sense of belonging and authentic joy. We understand that structure and safety require high levels of accountability that may lead to disciplinary action. We also believe that structure and safety require the presence of grace; however, never the absence of accountability. With these values in mind, we will host requisite summer orientations for our families (parents/guardians/guardians) on July 28-30, 2026, at 6:00 PM (parents/guardians will choose the evening they wish to attend). During these summer orientations, we will explicitly communicate our schoolwide expectations for high-quality academic instruction, school culture with high behavioral expectations, and school operations so that our families understand how their partnership and cooperation leads to high impact and successful outcomes in everything we do in our school community. Families will also learn how they can become actively engaged members of our school community through events, such as our weekly celebrations on Fridays known as Noble Fest.

We will also host a requisite scholar orientation for three half days on July 28-30, 2026, from 8:00 AM to 12 noon. (scholars must attend all three days). Scholar orientation is essential to provide teachers and school leaders with the intentional opportunity to develop relationships with scholars and families before the first day of school on August 3, 2026. Before the scholar-family orientations, we will host a required 17-day summer orientation for teachers, school leaders, and staff members to receive professional learning and development on July 6-31 at 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM. This orientation is essential

to provide all our stakeholders with the plans and practice of how we will provide our scholars and families with a high-quality academic experience where everyone is known, loved, respected, and most importantly, safe. During all orientations, we will review and demonstrate our Noble Core Values.

After Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has been approved and authorized to operate in partnership with Rutherford County Schools, the Proposed Executive Director will work with the Board of Directors to hire the founding school leaders that will begin planning for the 2026-27 school year beginning as early as January 2026 , pending the acquirement of startup grants and funding. Once the founding leadership team has been hired, the Proposed Executive Director will provide professional learning and development to the leadership team so that we are fully prepared to hire our founding teacher and to engage in high-quality professional learning and development in academic, school culture, and school operations prior to our summer orientations.

We will also plan a leadership retreat that includes understanding our educational landscape and how we will cater to the unique needs of our scholars and families. Stakeholders will complete a personality assessment (i.e., DISC Personality Assessment or Enneagram Personality Assessment), visit high-performing local charter schools (i.e., Purpose Preparatory Academy, STEM Prep, and Valor Collegiate Academies), and collect and analyze public school data to plan and practice weekly data meetings and instructional planning meetings. Participants will also conduct video analysis of instruction to norm on evaluations and conduct leadership team meetings and coaching sessions to learn what it takes to develop a high-quality, top performing public charter school that exceeds standards in Tennessee and across the nation.

Safe and Structured Environment. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide a safe and structured environment that aligns to our school's mission and Noble Core Values to ensure that our scholars spend most of their time being critical and creative thinkers in the learning environment. We will harness the power of diversity to inspire change and break down barriers so that our scholars and families, teachers and staff members, and members of the school community feel known, loved, and respected. We will teach our scholars that making sound decisions produces positive outcomes and consequences, while poor decisions produce negative outcomes and consequences. We will hold scholars accountable for the decisions they make throughout the instructional day, and we will respond with grace, partnered with accountability, as warranted.

Our scholars and teachers will receive intentional professional learning and development, aligned to our mission and Noble Core Values, to learn to model our high behavioral expectations in daily interactions. After Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has been approved and authorized to operate in partnership with Rutherford County Schools, our Board of Directors will review our Scholar-Family Handbook, which clearly outlines the school culture and high behavioral expectations and consequences. Modifications to the Scholar-Family Handbook will be made based on feedback and the consensus of the Board of Directors, and then they will vote on the final iteration of the handbook to be used as the official school culture and discipline policy.

Intervention and Supports for All Scholars. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s approach to school discipline has a blended approach of grace (restorative practices) and accountability (high behavioral expectations). To guide our discipline approach with grace and accountability, we will use tiered positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS). Explicitly, PBIS is our Tier I response to scholars' behavioral needs, which is a collaborative problem-solving model to prevent inappropriate scholar behavior through proactively teaching, modeling, and reinforcing desired behaviors and outcomes. We will collect and analyze data, strategically plan and practice, monitor progress, adjust interventions along the way, and communicate progress through our MTSS-Behavior processes.

Scholars demonstrating needs beyond our MTSS-Behavior model may qualify for more intensive interventions or special education services. To determine the level of support scholars may need, the scholar support team (S-Team) will conduct academic and behavior evaluations, in addition to the appropriate MTSS-Academic/Behaviors progress monitoring and data team meetings that have already taken place. These evaluations will occur after Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III intervention and support have not been successfully championed by the scholar.

Professional Learning and Development for Teachers and School Leaders. During summer orientation for teachers and school leaders, we will provide 17 days of intentional planning and practices aligned with our designs for academic instruction, school culture, and school operations to ensure we are ready for day one of instruction with our founding scholars and families. We will train our teachers to use our effective classroom culture techniques, such as the classroom management chart in Grades K-4 and the PowerSchool management system in Grades 5-8, Collaborative Problem-Solving across all grades, and the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for Management across all grades to implement schoolwide expectations for academics and behavior to maintain the fidelity of our systems and routines.

As a school community, we will normalize the implementation of our schoolwide and classroom culture systems and routines outlined in our Code of Conduct. Teachers will internalize our Noble Core Values using chants, Noble songs, and the Noble pledge to promote the mission of our school, so that we can effectively teach scholars our culture from day one.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

We will provide several opportunities during summer orientation for teachers and school leaders to plan and practice our schoolwide systems and routines in academic instruction, school culture, and school operations effectively.

Provisions for Scholars Who Enroll Mid-Year. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) welcomes new scholars and families in our school community at any time during the school year, as long as capacity permits. We will work to support all scholars and families by responding to their needs as they choose us for their school option. Scholars and families who enter our school environment mid-year will receive an abbreviated version of our summer orientations, offered by members of our school leadership team. We will also determine the academic and behavior supports scholars may need for proper placement in our school environment. As part of this process, our operations team will review scholars' records with attention to historical data, such as conduct from previous schools, MTSS-Academic/Behavior data, services provided, and any other academic or behavioral data to determine if there are any plans already in place for the new scholar.

The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will also review the Scholar-Family Handbook with families to explicitly share our Code of Conduct and our high behavioral expectations for scholars. After reviewing the Scholar-Family Handbook, scholars and families will sign the contract for the handbook in agreement to our policies and expectations. Scholars and families will also have the opportunity to meet the school principal to hear about what a high-performing, high behavioral expectations school culture looks like, and what it takes to make this happen daily. These meetings will take place every time a new scholar and family is enrolled. In the event there are several families, we will schedule a time to meet with families in a small group setting. And before families leave, scholars will receive room assignments, school uniforms, and academic instruction resources to ensure they are set for an awesome first day of learning Scholars will also attend the first school day with a current Novus Noble scholar as their ambassador to shadow.

Our Noble Core Values foster the foundation of our character development and education focus for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members. As prescribed by Crosstown High School Juniors and Seniors, Figure 30 illustrates how our scholars will model nobility in our school environment daily with tangible scholar actions.

Figure 30 - Noble Core Values' Alignment to Tangible Scholar Actions

Noble Core Value	Tangible Scholar Actions
Academic Excellence	• I take the skills learned to make future decisions that lead to success; I am capable of anything. • I am relentless in my drive for success in pursuit of colleges and careers and beyond.
Beacon of Joy	• I support those around me as a partner in pursuit of success. • I find my place in the world by tapping into my own joy to spread it to others around me.
Character Development	• I am self-aware and understand how my actions impact others. • I give and receive constructive feedback that helps us to learn and grow together.
Habits for Humanity	• I use my creative talents to support the needs of others. • I break free from limiting beliefs to change the game for myself and others.
Intellectual Curiosity	• I use curiosity to discover and pursue new knowledge. • I ask questions and use prior knowledge to develop my own solutions.

Section 1.7d: Explain how the school culture will embrace special populations such as students with disabilities, English Learners, and those at risk of academic failure or dropping out.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to fostering a supportive and high-achieving school culture where all scholars, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or challenges, can thrive. This includes scholars with disabilities, English learners, and those at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Our mission centers on equipping every K-8 scholar with the tools to achieve academic success, develop strong character, and pursue ambitious goals in college, career, and beyond. Here's how our school culture and strategies will support special populations:

High-Quality Instruction and Individualized Support. *Teachers will use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies and other evidence-based approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners in every classroom. Scholars with disabilities and English learners will receive tailored plans, such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) that aligns with their goals and unique needs. For scholars at risk of academic failure or dropping out,*

targeted interventions, mentorship programs, and academic counseling will ensure they stay on track and remain motivated.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Framework. *Aligned with Tennessee's MTSS framework, we will provide proactive, data-driven interventions for both academic and behavioral needs. We will provide universal support through high-quality core instruction and schoolwide behavioral expectations will provide a strong foundation for all scholars in Tier I. We will provide targeted interventions using small-group interventions that will address specific needs, such as skill gaps, language acquisition, or social-emotional challenges in Tier II. We will provide intensive support using individualized intervention for scholars requiring significant remediation or specialized services in Tier III. Details about our MTSS framework appear in Section 1.8.*

Special Populations Programming. *For scholars with disabilities, we will employ inclusive practices to ensure scholars learn alongside their peers in the least restrictive environment, with necessary accommodations and supports. Specialized staff, such as Special Education Teachers and Instructional Assistants, will collaborate with General Education Teachers to deliver services seamlessly. We will conduct regular progress monitoring and collaboration with families to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with scholars' goals. All instructional staff will participate in ongoing professional learning and development on strategies for teaching scholars with disabilities. For our English language learners, our ESL Teachers will provide direct instruction in language acquisition using high-quality curricula and resources to support academic growth. All instructional staff will participate in ongoing professional learning and development on strategies for teaching ELL, such as Structured English Immersion and linguistic scaffolding. For scholars at risk, our Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will develop mentorship programs, and community partnerships to address academic and non-academic barriers to success. We will use FastBridge and PowerSchool as our early warning systems to collect and analyze data on attendance, behavior, and coursework to identify at-risk scholars and intervene promptly. Extended learning opportunities, such as after-school tutoring and summer programs, will provide additional time and support for mastery. All instructional staff will participate in ongoing professional learning and development on strategies for teaching scholars at risk.*

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement. *We will administer regular assessments of both academic and behavioral progress to guide decision-making about interventions, accommodations, and modifications. Our school leadership team will analyze data to ensure access and outcomes for all scholars. Feedback from scholars and families, and school-based staff will inform adjustments to programs and policies, ensuring a positive and dynamic school culture. By implementing these intentional strategies and fostering a culture of high expectations, Novus SMART Academy will empower every scholar, regardless of their starting point, to excel academically, develop their character, and achieve their aspirations.*

Section 1.7e: *Provide the school's proposed student discipline policy as* ***Attachment F.*** *The proposed policy must comply with any applicable state laws and regulations.*

See Attachment F: Click Here

Section 1.7f: If not addressed in the student discipline policy, describe the philosophy for student discipline that supports the proposed school's model, including:

- Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior.
- A list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non- discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively; procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion.
- An explanation of how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings.
- Identify the staff position responsible for carrying out the school's discipline policies and provide a brief job description of the position; and
- How students and parents will be informed of the school's discipline policy.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will promote good discipline including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior. The discipline policy also includes a list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where nondiscretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, an explanation of the procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled because of a code of conduct violation, and a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion. The policy also contains an explanation of how the school will protect the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings, job descriptions and qualifications of the administrative individuals responsible for carrying out the school's discipline policies, and information about how students and parents/guardians will be informed of the school's discipline policy.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement an approach to discipline that promotes restorative practices to empower scholars to move past their mistakes and make better decisions in the future. At times, challenging behaviors will be addressed with disciplinary actions; however, we will fairly, firmly, and consistently use the MTSS-Behavior framework as a proactive approach to prevent scholars' challenging behaviors through data-driven planning and intervention practices that support their needs.

We will use Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) to support scholars in their understanding of their lagging skills and to reduce their challenging behaviors, activating their voice and choice through Plan B conversations that lead to restoration and overall scholar success. Our MTSS-Behavior framework will provide space for grace with accountability while leveraging the support of teachers, school leaders, and staff members to support scholars objectively over time without judgment.

Practices to Promote Good Discipline, Including Penalties and Incentives. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide Tier I high behavioral expectations and support for all scholars. Our teachers and school leaders will consistently use the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for classroom management to support school culture (Figure 31).

Figure 31 - Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence Management Trajectory

Get Better Faster Scope & Sequence: Management Trajectory	
Phase 1: Summer Professional Development & Learning to Develop Essential Routines & Procedures	
What	**How**
Routines & Procedures 101 Design and roll out… • Plan and practice critical routines and procedures moment-by moment. • Plan and practice the roll out: how to introduce routine for the first time.	• Explain what each routine means and what it will look like. • Write out what teachers and scholars do at each step, and what will happen with the scholars who do not get it right at first.
	• Plan the "I Do": how you will model the routine. • Plan the practice and what you will do when scholars don't get it right the first time.
Confident Presence: Stand and speak with purpose.	• Confident Stance: When giving instructions, stop moving, and strike a formal pose. • Warm-Demander Register: When giving directions, use a warm but firm register, including tone and word choice.
Phase 2: Roll Out & Monitor Routines & Build Trust & Rapport	
What	**How**
What to Do: Use the economy of language when giving directions.	• Chunk your directions by giving them one-by-one in a sequential order. • Make them bite-sized (e.g., 3-5 words) and observable. • Check for understanding of complex instructions.

See Your Scholars: Know when scholars are engaged or unengaged.	• Make eye contact by looking at all scholars for on-task engagement. Choose 3-4 focus areas (Places where you have scholars often off task) to look towards consistently.
	• Circulate the room with purpose (break the plane).
	  ○ Move along the desks and around the perimeter.
	  ○ Stand at the corners by identifying 3 spots on the perimeter of the room to which you can circulate to stand and monitor scholar work.

	○ Move away from the scholar who is speaking to monitor the whole room.
Routines & Procedures 201: Revise and perfect them.	• Revise any routine that needs more attention to detail or is inefficient, emphasizing what scholars and teachers are doing at each moment. • Do it again by having scholars do the same routine again if initially incorrect.
Build Trust & Rapport: Narrate the Positive	• Warm welcome by making eye contact, smiling, and greeting scholars. • Narrate what scholars do well, not what they do wrong. ○ "Table two is ready. Their books are open and all are reading." ○ "I like how Javon has anticipated a counter-argument to strengthen his thesis". • Praise intellect, not just behavior and reinforce scholars getting smarter. ○ Affirm the effort, not just the outcome: "Your diligence on revising your thesis really paid off here". • When narrating the positive, look at scholars who are off task.
Build Trust & Rapport: Make Authentic Connections	• Memorize scholar names and use them each time you call on them. • Make a self-to-scholar connection when they share a struggle, interest, or passion: "I struggled when…" or "I love that, too!" • Show genuine concern by keeping a tracker or important details and dates for each scholar to follow up with them; checking in with them after class when something is off.
Phase 3: Engage Every Scholar	
What	**How**
Whole-Class Reset	• Implement a planned whole-class reset to reestablish scholar expectations when a class routine has slowly weakened over previous classes. ○ "I've noticed that only 40% of us are writing endnotes. These are important because they demonstrate your understanding of the text. Today I'll be looking for endnotes in all your annotations". • Implement an "in-the-moment reset" when a class veers off task during the class period. ○ Example: Stop teaching. Confident stance. Clear What-to-Do: "Pencil down. Eyes on me in 3-2-1. Thank you. That's what Harvard looks like". Pick up tone and energy again.
Engage All Scholars: Make sure all scholars participate.	• Cold call by recording which scholars participate in each class; cold call those scholars who do not to ensure everyone participates. • Pre-call/warm call by letting a scholar who needs more time know you are calling their person next. • Turn-and-talk by implementing briefly (15-60 seconds) and frequently. • Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion by cold calling, all hands, and turn-and-talks. • Provided support to scholars with pre-identified needs. ○ Executive Functioning (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer). ○ Social Support (e.g., communication strategies, strategies for resolving conflict). ○ Stress (e.g., strategies for naming and managing).

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Individual Scholar Corrections	• Anticipate unengaged scholar behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect scholar using the least invasive intervention necessary:
	  ○ Proximity
	  ○ Eye Contact
	  ○ Use a Non-Verbal
	  ○ Say scholar's Name Quickly
	  ○ Small Consequence
	• Engage in "close the loop" conversations with scholars to process what happened and improve for next time.

Phase 4: Increase the Momentum of the Classroom	
What	**How**
Build the Momentum	• Give the scholars a simple challenge to complete a task. ○ Example: "Now I know you're only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master"! • Warm Energy: Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, and smile.
Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that scholars feel constantly engaged.	• Use a hand-held timer to stick to the time stamps in the lesson and give scholars an audio cue that it is time to move on. • Increase the rate of questioning no more than two seconds between when a scholar responds, and a teacher picks back up instruction. • Use countdowns to work the clock: "Do that in 5, 4, 3, 2,1". • Use call and response for keywords.

Engaged Small Group Work: Maximize the learning for every scholar during group work.	• Deliver explicit step-by-step instructions for group work.
	  ○ Make the group tasks visible/easily observable (e.g., a handout to fill in, notes to take, product to build, etc.).
	  ○ Create a role for every person (with each group no larger than the number of roles needed to accomplish the tasks at hand).
	  ○ Give timed instructions, with benchmarks for where the group should be after each time window.
	• Monitor the visual evidence of group progress.
	  ○ Check in on each group every 5-10 minutes to monitor progress.
	• Verbally enforce individual and group accountability.
	  ○ "You are five minutes behind; get back on track".
	  ○ "Lorena: focus".

Stretch It: Next Steps	
What	**How**
Keep it up!	Once you get this far, you can focus nearly entirely on rigor and deepening your content knowledge.

We will communicate our school culture and high behavioral expectations during all summer orientations before school begins on August 3, 2026, and teachers will be able to practice these systems and routines with scholars during our scholar orientation before the first day of school. Our proactive approach will ensure that scholars receive the necessary information and support to be able to meet our school culture and high behavioral expectations.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adopt the following systems for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members, to implement as we work to create a positive school culture with high behavioral expectations for all stakeholders:

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Color-Coded Clip Chart.** Grades K-4 will use a color-coded clip chart so that scholars can see and monitor their own discipline throughout the school day as adapted from Memphis MERIT Academy in Memphis, Tennessee and Circle City Prep in Indianapolis, Indiana. Powerful clip chart systems can help scholars take responsibility for their own behavior and traits[86]. All scholars start the day on Green, which gives scholars access to a fresh start to model our Noble Core Values. Teachers and school leaders move the clips down based on each scholars' behavior. Scholars also receive a reset after lunch beginning on Green if they are Yellow, Orange, or Red. Scholars on Green can be reset to Blue after lunch as well. This chart follows scholars throughout their entire day and is used by all teachers in the school building. Teachers will also record notes about scholar behavior infractions in PowerSchool for data collection and progress monitoring of scholar behavior.
- PowerSchool is an online platform that we will use to document and communicate scholar grades and behavior. We will use data collected to inform our MTSS-Behavior framework.
- **School Rules and Code of Conduct.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain the sacredness of high-quality academic instruction through consistently implementing our school culture and high behavioral expectations, and proactively responding to the challenging behaviors of scholars immediately. We have modeled our school culture and high behavioral expectations after the schoolwide discipline plans from BES schools such as Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee; Power Center Academy Middle School-Hickory Hill in Memphis, Tennessee; and Purpose Preparatory Academy in Nashville, Tennessee. Figure 31 illustrates our behavior management practices for grades K-4.

Figure 32 - Grades K-4 Clip Chart Behavior Management System

Behavior Management System Description & Consequences	
Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use a physical clip chart in grades K-4 so that scholars can visually track their own behavior daily as teachers and school leaders provide clear What-to-Do directions, redirections, and consequences. Our behavior system is color-coded as follows:	
Blue	Noble Behavior w/ No Redirections (0): Scholar demonstrates exemplary Noble Core Values actions, language and/or behaviors.
Green	Low-to-No Redirections (1-3): Scholar consistently demonstrates Noble Core Values during the instructional day.
Yellow	Moderate Redirections (4-6): Teacher has given an official warning to the scholar as a reminder of not meeting high behavioral expectations in the classroom. Consequently, the scholar's clip is moved to yellow on the clip chart.
Orange	Recurring Redirections & Recorded in PowerSchool (7-9): Scholar has received two warnings and needs to be temporarily separated from teammates to reset or to cool down in the classroom. Classroom cooldowns will not take more than five (5) minutes. While scholars are cooling down, they will sit in a designated area in the classroom and are expected to sit in the chair, lace their fingers, and sit silently until the teacher calls them back to rejoin the class.
Red	Recurring Redirections & Challenging Behaviors, Teacher-Scholar Conferences, Call Home, Recorded in PowerSchool (10 or more): Scholar has demonstrated ongoing challenging behaviors and failed to get back on track independently. Scholar automatically moves to red when displaying a severe challenging misbehavior related to physical or verbal aggression. The scholar will be removed from class and required to conference with either the Proposed Executive Director or designee. These Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) conferences are quick, direct and followed by an immediate call home. This may result in future loss of privilege, such as, but not limited to, attending Noble Fest, going on a field trip, and/or other school-based incentives.
Grey	Scholar removed from class at least two times and the challenging behavior continues to be significantly disruptive to the learning environment. The Proposed Executive Director or designee will contact a family member to pick up the scholar from the school or to complete work separate from the classroom with a designated staff member.
Daily Behavior Logs	Noble Reports are sent home daily in scholars' take-home folders, identifying each scholars' color for behavior in the morning and after lunch, and any additional notes from the teacher concerning

	challenging behaviors. Parents/guardians are required to sign reports and can write messages back to the teacher.
Reinforced Positive Behaviors	Our goal is to build habits of character and help scholars achieve success through positive behaviors. We will use positive narrations, public praise and recognition, and formal awards- such as Novus Nobles of the Week and Novus Nobles of the Month- to highlight scholars during our weekly Noble Fest on Fridays, where we will also praise college cohorts for reaching team goals tied to academics, classroom culture, attendance and completion rates during blended learning.

When scholars model positive behaviors that align to our high behavioral expectations and Noble Core Values, they will receive incentives. The first incentive that scholars can earn is being moved up a color on the behavior clip chart. We will also provide weekly rewards and incentives on Fridays in preparation for Noble Fest as follows:

- After two days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker.
- After three days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker and will be celebrated at Nobel Fest.
- After four days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, and pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures.
    - Scholars who are Blue or Green at least four days in one week will have the opportunity to be named the scholar of the week in their college cohorts.
    - The scholar of the week will receive a certificate and a free book of their choice to be presented during advisory time on Fridays.
    - Scholars of the week are automatically eligible to be named the scholar of the month as determined by academics, attendance and behavior.
- After five days in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures, and receive a special snack from our mobile desert cart.

We will recognize each grade-level scholar of the month by hanging their pictures outside of their classroom doors and on the main entrance bulletin board for the next month in celebration of their demonstration of our Noble Core Values and high behavioral expectations.

Our scholars in Grades 5-8 will have a separate high behavioral expectations system that includes the tracking of our Noble Core Values and minor/major infractions tied to challenging behaviors. These high behavioral expectations were adapted from educator experts at LEAD Public Schools in Nashville, Tennessee. These behaviors, whether positive or challenging, will be logged in our PowerSchool system, as outlined in Figure 32.

Figure 32 - Grades K-8 High Behavioral Expectations

Modeling High Behavioral Expectations	
Noble Core Value	**Example**
Academic Excellence (+15)	• Taking skills learned to make future decisions that lead to success; capable of anything. • Relentlessly driven to succeed in pursuit of colleges and careers and beyond. • Academic honesty (exceeding school and/or classroom expectations). • Writing in college sentences when not specified in the directions. • Finding the third way to understand a skill (even when hard). • Embracing new ideas and/or challenging work. • Remaining on task throughout the class. • Taking notes in class when not required. • Thoroughness (redoing an assignment because you know you can do better).
Beacon of Joy (+15)	• Supporting others as a partner in pursuit of success. • Finding space in the world by tapping into joy to spread it to others.

	• Acts of courageous behavior. • Noticing effort or growth in a classmate and encouraging them/shouting them out.
Character Development (+15)	• Self-aware and understand how actions impact others. • Giving and receiving constructive feedback that helps self and others to learn and grow together. • Unafraid to fail, but learning how to succeed moving forward. • Willing and eager to say the right answer after previously giving a wrong answer. • Owning a mistake without being asked to own it and offering an apology without blaming others. • Organization of personal belongings and/or space. • Demonstration of self-control. • Telling the truth, even if it means someone will get the consequence. • Doing the right things when nobody is watching. • Responding quickly and appropriately to redirection.
Habits for Humanity (+15)	• Using creative talents to support the needs of others. • Breaking free from limiting beliefs to change the game for self and others. • Displaying positive leadership. • Establishing integrity among peers. • Providing group and individual support to classmates as needed. • Getting homework from another scholar because they left theirs at school.
Intellectual Curiosity (+15)	• Using curiosity to discover and pursue new knowledge. • Asking questions and using prior knowledge to develop my own solutions. • Asking for help or asking clarifying questions in class when others seem to understand the lesson/concept.
Minor Infractions	
Challenging Behavior	**Example**
Talking (-5)	• Talking out of turn. • Inappropriate volume. • Making inappropriate noises.
Off Task (-5)	• Reading a book instead of focusing during the lesson. • Drawing on paper. • Dozing off. • Passing notes. • Working on non-related work.
Disruptive (-5)	• Kicking the table or chair. • Making any unnecessary noises in class or at whole school events. • Pencil tapping, drumming, singing/rapping in class. • Slamming book or door.
Organization/Unprepared (-5)	• Not having class materials (writing utensil, notebook, packet, etc.).

	• Does not have an agenda. • Being late to class without a pass (give the mark but keep the scholar in class. Do not send them to get a pass).
Major Infractions	
Challenging Behavior & Rationale	**Example**
Disrespect to Adults (-15): All teachers, school leaders and staff members have the right to speak and redirect scholars throughout the building. Interactions between scholars and adults should always be positive and promoting; however, the adult must always remain emotionally constant when handling challenging behaviors.	• Talking back or yelling at or to an adult. • Cursing at an adult. • Walking away from an adult. • Inappropriate physical actions toward an adult (may warrant a suspension).
Failure to Comply (-15): It is important that all scholars meet the expectations of teachers, school leaders, and staff members daily. When scholars do not meet expectations, it impacts the culture of the learning environment and takes the focus off learning. Teachers cannot allow scholars to undermine their authority as the leader of the classroom.	• Shouting out. • Slow response to directions. • Non-compliance with transition procedures. • Sleeping in class. • Prohibited use of technology (may lead to loss of technology use based on the nature of the offense).
Inappropriate Response (-15): It is important that scholars advocate for themselves. However, there are appropriate ways to disagree with someone that fosters discussion and growth. When responding, we want to help scholars become aware of those responses that are disrespectful and hinder a growth conversation.	• Rolling Eyes • Smacking Lips • Speaking back in a raised voice. • Sucking Teeth
Unprofessional (-15): Dressing for success is important to help us cut down on the amount of distractions that take away from learning time. We all have a uniform we wear that shows that we are present and ready to work. In addition to looking professional, there are duties that come along with the "job." We are trying to build in the habit of accountability to major duties for our scholars.	• Combing/Braiding Hair in Class • Writing on body or uniform. • Putting on Makeup in Class • Shirt Untucked (out of uniform generally) • Sleeping in class after reminders to stand or walk around. • Chewing gum, eating in class, etc. • Horseplaying or Throwing Objects • Failure to turn in progress reports or other signed forms. • Phone rings in class. • On the wrong website, or inappropriate use of school materials.
Disrespect to Community (-15): As a school, we are fostering a culture of respect. Respect for each other and respect for learning must be paramount. We do not allow disrespect and take it very seriously because we want all scholars and staff members to work in a safe environment.	• Classroom Disruption • Cafeteria Disruption • Inappropriate body language. • Calling someone a negative name. • Pushing/kicking/hitting someone. • Use of profanity. • Seeking a different answer (one teacher says no, you ask another teacher). • Writing on school property. • Refusing to respond to a staff member.

	• Inappropriate use of technology. • Disrespect toward peers/adults. • Copying work/cheating on classwork, test, or quiz. • Refusing to follow a specific direction. • Walking away from a staff member. • Skipping others in line for breakfast or lunch.
Out of Area (-15): It is our responsibility to keep our scholars safe. Therefore, it is important that we know where scholars are at all times. This helps our scholars learn responsibility and communication skills.	• Skipping class: 15 minutes or later arrival to class without a note. • In the hallway during class without a pass (paper or digital). • Being anywhere in the building without permission.
6 Minor Infractions -5 (Automatic Detention)	**2 Major Infractions -15 (Automatic Detention)**
Distractions (D)	**Disrespect to Adults (DA)**
• Purposefully Being Loud • Purposefully Yawning/Burping • Any Inappropriate Noises	• Talking Back / Yelling at an Adult • Cursing Out an Adult • Walking away from an Adult
Talking (T)	**Disrespect to Community (DC)**
• Talking Out of Turn • Talking During Test • Excessive Volume	• Horseplaying • Disrupting Class Deliberately • Vandalizing School Property
Off Task (OT)	**Inappropriate Response (IR)**
• Not Following Directions • Disengaged • Misusing Resources	• Arguing • Sucking Teeth • Disrespectful Tone
Organization/Unprepared (O/U)	**Unprofessional (UP)**
• Unprepared, Unorganized • Out of Uniform • Late to Class	• Combing/Braiding Hair or Putting on Makeup • Sleeping in Class • Phone Rings in Class or on Inappropriate Website
	Failure to Comply (FC)
	1. Slow Response to Directions 2. Repeatedly Not Following Directions 3. Not Completing Homework
	Out of Area (OA)
	• Skipping Class • In Hall Without Hall Pass • Being Anywhere in the Building Without Permission

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Please note that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will carry out the discipline policy adopted by the Board of Directors post-authorization to govern the discipline procedures used with all scholars. Our discipline policy defines suspensions and expulsions as follows:

Suspensions. The option to suspend a scholar will be considered when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. A suspension is defined as any time a scholar is required to be removed from the instructional learning environment and not in attendance at school due to the display of challenging behaviors. To sustain a positive school culture and high behavioral expectations where everyone is known, loved and respected, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will suspend scholars from our school when there are breaches to our school Code of Conduct and high behavioral expectations. A scholar may be suspended by decision of the Proposed Executive Director (Years 1-5), and when the school is at full scale, by the School Principal in collaboration with Assistant Principals. The Board of Directors will receive notice of all suspensions data during our state-of-the-school data snapshots presented at monthly board meetings. Families will be notified immediately when a scholar has been issued an in-school suspension and/or an out-of-school suspension. After the scholar serves the out-of-school suspension, the scholar and family will be required to attend a scheduled school reentry meeting to continue collaboration and support with restorative practices that will set the scholars up for success as they return to the school environment. Key stakeholders, such as the Proposed Executive Director (replaced by the School Principal as hired), and Assistant Principals will attend school reentry meetings to ensure that everyone, including the scholar, is aligned with the high behavioral expectations moving forward.

We will also create a positive school environment that meets the needs of all scholars and their rights, especially for our scholars who receive prescribed services with an IEP, ILP, 504 Plan, tiered systems of support, and/or any other plans designed to support scholars where they are. We will implement the MTSS-Behavior framework to evaluate scholars' trends in challenging behavior and the impact it has on their academic progress.

Expulsions. The option to expel a scholar will always be our last resort when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. Expulsions are the result of teachers and school leaders collaborating with scholars and families, and service providers, exhausting all efforts that the scholar has not responded to, such as but not limited to parental involvement, advisory support, school counseling, behavior improvement plans (BIP), Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), detentions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school- suspensions. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to expel a scholar whose challenging behaviors constitute endangerment to self, other scholars, and/or staff members. There is zero tolerance for the possession and/or use of a gun or deadly weapon on our school campus, which could harm scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members. We also reserve the right to expel a scholar for the possession, use of, and/or selling of alcohol or controlled substances of any kind while on the school campus. Scholars who have demonstrated challenging behaviors and/or open defiance towards authority that have led to multiple suspensions over time are also at risk of expulsion.

For a scholar to be expelled, the process must be initiated by the Proposed Executive Director to include discussions with the entire faculty, with a scheduled hearing to follow with the scholar and family. A scholar who is expelled will receive due process under Tennessee state law. At Novus SMART Academy (K-8), due process will include the following statement that is subject to legal review and the Board of Directors' approval: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) follows standard disciplinary policies and procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures. If the Proposed Executive Director believes expulsion is warranted, the scholar will be expelled. The Proposed Executive Director will also report any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons as outlined in TCA 39-17-1309 to the La Vergne and/or Smyrna Police Departments. Any decision to expel a scholar will require the Board of Directors' approval, and families may, first, appeal the decision to the Proposed Executive Director before filing a grievance with the Board of Directors.

Appeals Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. Families reserve the right to appeal suspensions and/or expulsions within ten school days by submitting an appeals letter to the Proposed Executive Director of the school. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the following procedure as a guide for families to appeal in the most effective manner:

1. The Proposed Executive Director sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the appeal submission.
2. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
3. After listening to the appeal, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. Although there is an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Grievance Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. If families are still dissatisfied with the results of the appeal process with the Proposed Executive Director, they reserve the right to submit a grievance letter to the Board of Directors within ten days after meeting with the Proposed Executive Director and the Assistant Principal.

1. The Board Chair sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the grievance submission.

2. Members of the Board of Directors, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
3. After listening to the grievances of families, the Board Chair along with members of the Board of Directors present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. The Board of Directors is also able to ask clarifying questions that both the families and the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal can answer.
4. After the grievance hearing, the Board Chair lets families know that although there was an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.
5. Within 24 hours, families are notified by the Proposed Executive Director about the decision of the Board of Directors, whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Filing a Complaint. Families have the right to file a complaint by submitting a letter to the Proposed Executive Director of the school. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the following procedure as a guide for families to file a complaint in the most effective manner:

1. The Proposed Executive Director sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the complaint submission.
2. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement meet with families to listen to their concerns.
3. After listening to the concerns, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will present any evidence-based data related to the complaint. Although there is an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the complaint, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine how the complaint is mitigated.

If families are still dissatisfied with the results of how the complaint is mitigated with the Proposed Executive Director, they have the right to submit a complaint letter to the Board of Directors within 10 days of meeting with the Proposed Executive Director and the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement.

1. The Board Chair sets up an appointment with families within 48 hours of the complaint submission.
2. Members of the Board of Directors, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement meet with families to listen to their concerns.
3. After listening to the complaints of families, the Board Chair along with members of the Board of Directors present evidence-based data related to the complaint. The Board of Directors is also able to ask clarifying questions that both the families and the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement can answer.
4. After the complaint hearing, the Board Chair lets families know that although there is an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of their complaints, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor in how the complaint is mitigated.
5. Within 24 hours, families are notified by the Proposed Executive Director about the final decision of the Board of Directors and how the complaint will be mitigated.

Code of Conduct. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will align its Code of Conduct to the Rutherford County Schools' Code of Conduct regarding challenging behaviors, disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary options[87]. Our school culture and high behavioral expectations will include restorative practices that allow scholars to exercise their voices and choices through Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), and we will incentivize scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members for modeling our Noble Core Values. We will meet these standards not by lowering the bar of excellence but by defending the bar of excellence with high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations for all scholars.

High behavioral expectations for all scholars means dismantling marginalized practices and replacing them, first, with the belief that all scholars can and will achieve success holistically with the appropriate support systems in place. We will reinforce high behavioral expectations for every scholar and include structured opportunities to reinforce the desired outcomes we expect through their actions. Teachers and school leaders will practice emotional constancy in the spirit of being fair, firm, and consistent, and they will strive to deliver consequences with minimal distractions to the sacredness of instructional time. To that end, redirecting challenging behaviors and/or delivering a consequence should not antagonize or embarrass scholars, regardless of the circumstances.

Our approach to school culture and high behavioral expectations will be included in our Scholar-Family Handbook and translated for families in their home language. We have five levels for disciplinary procedures and options based on challenging behaviors that scholars may demonstrate in violation of our school culture and behavior system, as outlined in Figure 33.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 33- Code of Conduct

Level I Challenging Behaviors This level includes minor challenging behaviors on the part of the scholar which impedes orderly classroom guidelines or interferes with the orderly operation of the school, but which can usually be handled by an individual teacher, school leader or staff member.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**
• Classroom disturbances • Classroom tardiness • Cheating and lying • Abusive language • Failure to do assignments or carry out directions • Wearing, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment • Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)	• The staff member intervenes immediately. • The staff member determines what offense was committed and its severity. • The staff member determines who committed the offense and if he/she understands the nature of the offense. • The staff member employs appropriate disciplinary options. • The record of the offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the staff member.	• Verbal reprimand • Special assignment • Restricting activities • Counseling • Withdrawal of privileges • Issuance of demerits • Strict supervised study • Detention • In-school suspension • Community service • Reteaching of expectations • Restorative practices • Behavior contract • Mediation • Mentoring
Level II Challenging Behaviors This level includes challenging behaviors whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These behaviors do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but have educational consequences serious enough to require corrective action on the part of the school leadership team.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**
• Continuation of unmodified Level I challenging behaviors • School or class tardiness • School or class truancy • Using forged notes or excuses • Disruptive classroom behavior • Possession of a personal communication device when not authorized, if not drug related • Victimization of any scholar (hara	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation made by the staff member and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the staff member of the action.	• Teacher/schedule change • Mediation • Modified probation • Behavior modification programs • Peer counseling • Referral to outside agency • Transfer • Detention • Suspension from school-sponsored activities or from riding school bus

	• The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	• In-school suspension • Out-of-school suspension • Referral for MTSSB • Revision • Reteaching of expectations • Referral to Tier 2 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service

Level III Challenging Behaviors

This level includes acts directly against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Continuation of unmodified Level I and II challenging behaviors • Fighting • Vandalism (minor) • Use, possession, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or a non-THC vape product • Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia • Stealing • Threats to others (including staff) • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Elopement from classroom/school building • Possession of fireworks not deemed an explosive by law enforcement	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal may refer the incident to the Executive Director and make recommendations for consequences. • If the scholar's program is to be changed, adequate notice shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) of the charges against him, his/her right to appear at a hearing, and his/her right to be represented by a person of his/her choosing.	• In-school suspension • Detention • Restitution from loss, damage, or stolen property • Out-of-school suspension • Social adjustment classes • Transfer • Referral to Tier 2 or 3 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service • Development of a safety plan

	• Any change in school assignment is appealable to the Board. • The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	

Level IV Challenging Behaviors

This level of challenging behaviors include acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are so serious that they usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the scholar from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board of Directors. If a scholar's action poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, a teacher, school leader, or staff member may use reasonable force when necessary to prevent bodily harm or death to another person.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Continuation of unmodified Level I, II, and III behaviors • Death threats • Extortion • Vandalism • Theft/possession/sale of stolen property • Arson • Sexual misconduct not resulting in a charge deemed a zero tolerance in Policy 6.309. • Marketing/Possession/distribution/sale/transfer of any substance which is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size or markings to a controlled substance • Possession/use/sale/transfer of alcoholic beverages • Possession/distribution of any drug paraphernalia • Use/transfer of unauthorized substances • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Off-campus criminal behavior that results in the scholar being legally charged and/or convicted with a felony or with what would have been a felony if the scholar were an adult, and the scholar's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or disrupts the educational process.	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar. • The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified. • Law enforcement officials are contacted. • The incident is reported, and recommendations are made to the Executive Director. • If the scholar's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.	• Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement • Long term out-of-school suspension • Expulsion up to one (1) year • Alternative schools • Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement

Level V Challenging Behaviors

The below offenses have been deemed zero tolerance offenses under state law and by Rutherford County Schools Board Policy. Except offenses deemed reasoned judgment offenses, notated with an asterisk, the below offenses shall result in an expulsion for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year, subject to modification by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis. Reasoned judgment offenses allow the principal to take into consideration intent and other factors to determine the appropriate level of discipline.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options

• Unlawfully using or being under the influence of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug.
• Possessing unlawfully any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance,
  ○ analogue, or legend drug.
• Sale/distribution/transfer of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug.
• Possession of a firearm.
• Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer.
• Aggravated assault
• Bomb threat
• Threat of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity.
• Possession of substances or devices deemed to be explosives by law enforcement
• scholars charged with committing an on-campus violent felony listed in Board Policy 6.309
• Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons other than firearms.*
• Possession/use/transfer of other instruments and substances with the intent to do harm to self or others or in a manner that renders the item dangerous.*
	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar.
	• The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct.
	• The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified.
	• Law enforcement officials are contacted.
	  ○ his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.
		• For zero tolerance offenses, expulsion for no less than one (1) year. Scholars may make applications for modification to the Executive Director.
		• For reasoned judgment offenses marked with an asterisk:
		  ○ Suspension

Additional Guidelines

1. A principal shall not impose successive short-term suspensions that cumulatively exceed ten (10) days for the same offense.
2. A teacher or other school official shall not reduce or authorize the reduction of a scholar's grade because of discipline problems except in deportment or citizenship.
3. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on absences except as provided by Board Policy.
4. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on failure to…
    1. Pay any activity fee;
    2. Pay a library or other school fine;
    3. Make restitution for lost or damaged school property.

Protecting the Rights of Scholars with Disabilities. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will fully support scholars with disabilities who struggle with challenging behaviors. Our support model is collaborative and inclusive of families in partnership with related services providers offered by the school as a continuum of services, and in some cases, professional services that have been solicited by families. As part of the individualized education plan (IEP) process, the IEP team will create a behavior intervention plan (BIP) driven by the results of the functional behavior assessment (FBA) as an intervention to address the challenging behaviors moving forward. The BIP will explicitly outline rewards and consequences the scholar will receive, and next steps to address new or recurring challenging behaviors should they surface**.** In the event a scholar with disabilities receives at least ten days of out-of-school suspension, the IEP team will meet to facilitate a manifestation determination review (MDR) to determine whether the behavior in question is a direct

result of the scholar's disability. If it is determined that the behavior in question is a direct result of the scholar's disability, the IEP team will review the current IEP to determine next steps regarding additional support and services needed. If it is determined that the behavior in question is not a direct result of the scholar's disability, then the scholar may be disciplined in a manner that is comparable to a scholar who receives general education services.

Parent Participation. In accordance with the Rules of State Board of Education for Special Education Programs and Services, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will notify the families of scholars with a disability at least ten days before an IEP meeting to ensure that they have an opportunity to attend. MDR meetings will be held after a 24-hour notice has been issued to families as mandated in the Tennessee Rules of State Board of Education for parent participation (0520-01-09.15). When a scholar with disabilities returns to school, the services prescribed in the BIP based on the MDR will be provided to scholars immediately. These services ensure that scholars remain in their least restrictive learning environment and continue to have access to high-quality academic instruction in the general education classroom where services are offered in an inclusive classroom environment.

Description of Individuals Responsible for Carrying out Discipline Policies. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school, and will manage all tasks related to school culture and high behavioral expectations beginning in Year 1. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access whenever there is a breach in school culture involving scholars who receive special education services. As the K-2 Assistant Principal, 3-5 Assistant Principal, and 6-8 Principal are added to the team, they will collaborate with the School Principal and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school. The school leadership team, which also includes the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will meet at least once weekly to discuss the academic, school culture, and school operations vision and goals of the school.

Informing Scholars and Parents. We will always communicate our discipline policy to families before the start of the school year, during our scholar and family orientations. Scholars and families will receive a copy of the Scholar-Family Handbook annually in their home language. In accordance with our grievance policy to be adopted by the Board of Directors, any complaints and comments regarding our school culture and high behavioral expectations, or regarding discipline actions or practices taken, will initially be addressed to and by the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal, or School Principal, as applicable. The Proposed Executive Director will also make decisions on revisions to the Scholar-Family Handbook as necessary and will submit those revisions to the Board of Director for final review and approval. Modifications to the Scholar-Family Handbook can also be made based on feedback and the consensus of the Board of Directors before final review and approval, and then they will vote on the final iteration of the handbook to be used as the official school culture and discipline policy.

Please see Attachment F for this information: Click Here

Section 1.7g: Detail any goals related to student attendance and describe the plan to collaborate with families and the community to address and combat chronic absenteeism.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) recognizes consistent scholar attendance as a critical driver of academic success and personal development. Our school has established the following measurable attendance goals:

- **Maintain a Schoolwide Attendance Rate of 95% or Higher:** Ensuring daily attendance for optimal learning outcomes.
- **Reduce Chronic Absenteeism Below 10%:** Addressing and mitigating barriers that result in scholars missing 10% or more school days annually.
- **Achieve Full Compliance with TDOE Truancy Protocols:** Implementing evidence-based interventions for scholars meeting truancy thresholds.

Family and Community Engagement Strategies. At Novus SMART Academy, we view families and the community as indispensable partners in combating chronic absenteeism. Our collaborative strategies include proactive communication and education. Family orientations will outline the importance of our attendance goals and provide practical strategies to overcome barriers. Through newsletters, social media, and events, we will educate families about attendance policies, the impact of absenteeism, and solutions to challenges such as transportation and health concerns. We will also provide communication using attendance materials that will be accessible and translated to ensure all families understand expectations and available support.

Early Identification and Intervention. Attendance data will be tracked daily using PowerSchool, providing immediate alerts for absences. This allows timely outreach to families, including calls, texts, and emails. We will use a tiered MTSS framework to provide schoolwide incentives like recognition during weekly Noble Fest and quarterly honors programs for Tier I supports; individualized interventions, such as counseling and goal-setting meetings for scholars with emerging attendance issues for Tier II supports; and intensive support, including case management, home visits, and referrals to external services for chronic absenteeism cases for Tier III supports.

Section 1.7 - School Culture and Discipline
(Required for All Sponsors)

Building Strong Relationships. We will strengthen parent-teacher partnerships through parent-teacher conferences that will emphasize attendance, offering actionable solutions to improve it. When necessary, school leadership and teachers will visit families at their homes or a mutually-safe preferred location to address barriers directly and collaboratively.

Leveraging Community Resources. We will provide access to local transportation providers to address commuting challenges. We will also develop partnerships with local clinics and healthcare providers to support families dealing with health-related absences. We will also offer mentorship and enrichment opportunities through partnerships with community organizations and will provide mentorship and extracurricular activities that promote attendance.

Addressing Root Causes. We will also work to provide support for socioeconomic barriers by providing resources like uniforms, school supplies, and food bank referrals that will be available to families in need. We will also provide mental health services through our School Counselors and Project Play Therapy (as prescribed by the special education program) that will support scholars facing anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges affecting attendance.

Continuous Improvement and Accountability. We will engage in data-driven decision-making by regularly reviewing attendance trends to inform adjustments to interventions and initiatives. Families, scholars, and staff will have opportunities to provide input on attendance strategies. Attendance metrics and progress toward goals will be published to maintain accountability and celebrate successes.

Weekly and Quarterly Celebrations. Incentives are integral to our attendance initiatives. During our weekly Noble Fest, we will recognize individual scholars and classes with exemplary attendance. During our quarterly honors programs, we will celebrate scholars with perfect attendance to reinforce the value of consistent participation. By fostering a culture of attendance, Novus SMART Academy will ensure that every scholar can thrive academically and personally. Through strong partnerships with families and the community, we will address chronic absenteeism and support our scholars in meeting their full potential.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 1.8a. Describe the school leadership team's experience supporting students with disabilities, English learners, at-risk students, and intellectually gifted students. Explain the plan to ensure the school is appropriately staffed to meet these student groups' needs.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed a strong leadership structure that will fully support all scholars in Grades K-8. All teachers, school leaders, and staff members will be hired based on their belief that all scholars can learn and will achieve at high levels and their unwavering commitment to high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations for all scholars. The leadership team and their proposed roles will directly impact the success of scholars within our special populations, as follows.

Proposed Executive Director. Dr. Jeremy Sager, the Proposed Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), has more than 15 years of experience in education as a classroom teacher, K-12 school leader, and district leader. Dr. Sager has also managed contracted service providers, teachers, and school leaders who provide services to support scholars identified in special populations. Dr. Sager has access to research-based resources and scientifically proven strategies to improve learning outcomes for all scholars and will use them to provide professional learning and development to teachers, school leaders, and staff. Professional learning and development will help Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to address the academic needs of diverse learners with the intention to close gaps in academics and behaviors.

Assistant Principal of Scholar Access. As a vital member of the school-based leadership team, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will play a critical role in ensuring all scholars, to include students with disabilities, English learners (EL), at-risk students, and intellectually gifted students, receive the specialized supports they need to achieve academic success and personal growth and development. To meet the needs of these scholars, we will implement a comprehensive staffing plan that aligns with our mission of fostering global achievers to include Licensed Special Education Teachers, Licensed ESL teachers, a Licensed Gifted Education Teacher, and Teachers-in-Residence.

Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will have a dual certification in Special Education and English as a Second Language, meeting the Tennessee Department of Education licensure requirements. This leader will oversee the implementation and compliance of our special populations program by managing and coaching Special Education Teachers, ESL teachers, and the Gifted Education Teacher. Our Licensed Special Education Teachers, Licensed ESL Teachers, and Licensed Gifted Education Teacher, with collaboration with our General Educations as applicable, will serve as the primary specialized instructional leaders, committed to meeting the diverse learning needs of our scholars, as defined by the Tennessee Department of Education. Each Teacher will play a vital role in ensuring access to rigorous, high-quality instruction while adhering to state standards and promoting student achievement across a spectrum of abilities.

Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will also oversee the implementation and continuous improvement of our Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Academics (MTSS-Academics), in alignment with the Tennessee Department of Education's RTI²-Academics framework. This leader will ensure the use of evidence-based instructional practices and data-driven interventions that meet the needs of all scholars across Tiers I, II, and III. The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will coordinate universal screeners for reading and math three times per year, facilitate data team meetings to identify students in need of intervention, and ensure timely access to Tier II and Tier III supports. They will monitor student progress using curriculum-based measures and other validated tools, ensuring interventions are implemented with fidelity and adjusted based on each scholar's response to instruction. General Education Teachers will serve as the first line of support through the delivery of high-quality, standards-aligned Tier I instruction that is differentiated to meet a broad range of learning needs. They will work collaboratively with the MTSS-Academics team to identify struggling learners, participate in intervention planning, and regularly monitor student progress. ESL Teachers will provide targeted support to English Learners within the MTSS framework, ensuring that academic interventions are linguistically appropriate and aligned with each student's ILP. The Gifted Education Teacher will contribute to the development of differentiated enrichment strategies for scholars identified as intellectually gifted, ensuring their academic needs are met through Tier I extensions and Tier II opportunities when appropriate.

Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will also serve as the primary administrator responsible for overseeing all contracted service providers that support the implementation of our special education program. While our internal team, comprised of Licensed Special Education Teachers, Licensed ESL Teachers, and a Licensed Gifted Education Teacher, will provide a robust continuum of services tailored to the diverse needs of our scholars, we will also partner with Project Play Therapy to offer specialized services. Through this partnership, Project Play Therapy will offer specialized services that include speech therapy, occupational therapy, direct behavior services, counseling services (in addition to the school-based counseling provided by our School Counselor), and a range of psychological services. These contracted services are essential in ensuring that our scholars receive comprehensive, targeted support that aligns with their prescribed service needs.

A key component of our collaboration with Project Play Therapy is the integration of their School Psychologist, who will lead and support both initial evaluations and reevaluations. This professional will work closely with our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and special populations teachers to develop Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Intervention Plans (BIPs), interpret evaluation results, and guide data-driven interventions tailored to individual scholars. In addition, the School Psychologist will actively participate in a range of team meetings—including eligibility determinations, IEP meetings, S-Team meetings (supporting Child Find initiatives), Section 504 team meetings, and manifestation determination reviews—all of which will be facilitated by members of our licensed special populations team.

While the school psychologist will be integral to the assessment and planning process, this person will not be responsible for administrative tasks that are managed by our licensed special populations team. Responsibilities such as scheduling IEP meetings, sending meeting invitations, and coordinating ongoing communication with families and staff will fall under the purview of our licensed special populations team. These teachers will serve as case managers and ensure that all procedural and compliance requirements are met in a timely and effective manner.

Special Education Teachers. Our Licensed Special Education Teachers are charged with evaluating, developing and implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) in accordance with federal IDEA regulations and Tennessee Department of Education guidelines. They will provide differentiated instruction, targeted MTSS interventions for Academics and support with Behaviors, and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities, ensuring their participation in the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible. Our Special Education Teachers will collaborate closely with the General Education Teachers and Families, adjust instructional strategies, and support inclusive practices. Their responsibilities include ongoing documentation of student growth, conducting educational assessments, and advocating for the academic and behavioral needs of their scholars' prescribed service needs.

ESL Teachers. Our Licensed ESL Teachers will support our English Learners (ELs) by delivering instruction in the inclusion classroom setting, or in our Structured English Immersion classroom setting, to promote English language acquisition and development across the reading, writing, speaking, and listening domains. Our ESL Teachers will align their instructional practices with the Tennessee Academic Standards and the ELPA21 English Language Development (ELD) Standards that focus on receptive, productive, and interactive skills and take a functional approach of communication over correctness. This will ensure that all ELs can access grade-level content while developing linguistic proficiency. Our ESL Teachers will assess language development, collaborate with general educators to scaffold instruction, and facilitate practices that affirm students' linguistic capacity. They will also maintain compliance with the Tennessee Department of Education's EL requirements, including annual proficiency assessments, targeted MTSS interventions for Academics and support with Behaviors, program placement decisions, and parental communication regarding prescribed service needs.

Gifted Education Teacher. Our Licensed Gifted Education Teacher will serve our scholars identified with demonstrated or potentially high intellectual ability, creativity, and/or academic achievement. Our Gifted Education Teacher will also be charged with developing and implementing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in accordance with federal IDEA regulations and Tennessee Department of Education guidelines for Gifted Learners. Our Gifted Education Teacher will design and deliver advanced, accelerated, and enriched instruction tailored to meet the cognitive, social, and emotional needs of our Gifted Learners. Our Gifted Teacher will also operate within the framework of RTI2-Enrichment and will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and grade-level teams to identify scholars for gifted services based on multiple criteria to include standardized assessments, teacher observations, and student performance data. Our Gifted Education Teacher will provide direct instruction, consult with the General Education Teachers to integrate enrichment strategies into the classroom, and ensure that scholars' learning pathways remain challenging and engaging.

Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement. As an integral member of the school-based leadership team, the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement plays a pivotal role in fostering a supportive, inclusive school environment that prioritizes access for all scholars while strengthening partnerships with families and the broader community. In close collaboration with the School Counselor, the Assistant Principal of. School Culture and Community Engagement will oversee the design, implementation, and monitoring of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavior (MTSS-Behavior) at our school. This partnership ensures a unified, data-driven approach to supporting scholar well-being and promoting positive behavior.

Our Assistant Principal and School Counselor will oversee the schoolwide implementation of behavior intervention plans with fidelity, utilizing the CharacterStrong framework to guide interventions and ensure consistent progress monitoring. They will co-lead efforts to establish and maintain early identification systems that monitor attendance, academic performance, and behavioral trends to proactively support scholars who may be at risk. Additionally, the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will coordinate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to ensure all prescribed service needs and contracted services are delivered appropriately.

This collaborative leadership will also focus on creating mentorship and peer-support programs that foster a strong sense of belonging and resilience among scholars. Furthermore, the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will provide ongoing professional learning and development for teachers, equipping them with strategies for differentiation, effective classroom management, and the implementation of targeted interventions. By working in tandem, the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement and the School Counselor will ensure that the MTSS-Behavior framework is executed with coherence, intentionality, and a deep commitment to scholar success.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will also establish relationships with local organizations to provide in-kind resources and donations, such as tutoring, mental health services, and enrichment programs. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will also host community events to promote awareness and engagement around the school's mission. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will also oversee the Family Advisory Council and Engagement (FACE), ensuring representation of families with diverse needs and perspectives. The FACE of Novus will collaborate to develop workshops that will empower families with strategies for supporting their children's learning at home, and facilitate regular communication with families through multilingual newsletters, forums, and digital platforms.

Board of Directors. As evidenced by Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Letter of Intent submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education and Rutherford County Schools, two of our founding team members served in education throughout their careers. Furthermore, all founding team members have embraced the responsibility of fulfilling our mission, which is to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth so that scholars may thrive in their chosen college and career paths and make a positive impact on society.

- **Andrea Coleman.** Andrea Coleman has over twelve years of experience as an exceptional education teacher and leader, demonstrating her ability to advocate for and design strategies that ensure access for all learners. Her deep belief in the mantra "ALL means ALL" will drive her contributions. As a member of the Academics Committee, Andrea will support in monitoring the school's inclusive practices, ensuring students with disabilities have access to the same high-quality instruction as their peers. Her expertise will help shape organizational policies and ensure the Proposed Executive Director hires an Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and licensed special education teachers who will implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) with fidelity and ensure staff receive adequate training in evidence-based interventions. Andrea's advocacy for students will also inform the adoption of teaching strategies that celebrate linguistic diversity while fostering English language acquisition and development. Her insights as a member of the Academics Committee will ensure that the school-based leadership team uses research-based strategies and resources to support language acquisition and development for our ELs. Andrea will collaborate with the Academics Committee to ensure our school promotes proactive approaches to identifying and supporting at-risk students, focusing on both academic and socio-emotional interventions. Her experience in education and as a parent ensures that our Proposed Executive Director will also hire a Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement that will focus on connecting families with resources to address barriers to student success. Andrea will collaborate with the Academics to ensure our school provides enrichment opportunities that challenge gifted students through advanced coursework and project-based learning. As a Founding Parent, Andrea's perspective ensures that Novus SMART Academy remains a community-centered school that prioritizes the needs of every child. Her role as both a parent and Board member underscores her commitment to fostering a learning environment where every child can thrive, regardless of background or ability.
- **Dexter Peterson.** Dr. Dexter Peterson is a dedicated special education professional with a strong commitment to supporting diverse learners through innovative, data-driven instruction. He currently serves as a Special Education Contractor and Consultant for Metro Nashville Public Schools, where he designs and implements targeted lesson plans, facilitates professional development sessions for faculty and staff on best instructional practices, and provides expert support in co-taught classroom environments. In this role, Dr. Peterson also develops and writes Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), ensuring that all scholars receive tailored support to meet their unique needs. During his time at Lead Southeast High School in Nashville, Tennessee, Dr. Peterson worked closely with scholars experiencing cognitive and developmental delays, creating and executing personalized, data-informed lesson plans that drove measurable academic growth. He was responsible for drafting and maintaining compliant IEPs, as well as collecting ongoing student data to assess progress and refine instructional approaches. His ability to balance compliance with creativity demonstrates his deep understanding of both the regulatory and instructional sides of special education. Dr. Peterson's experience will be instrumental in setting Novus SMART Academy (K-8) up for ongoing success. His strong background in inclusion classroom practices and his ability to lead data-informed instruction align seamlessly with our mission to provide a high-quality education for every scholar. His expertise ensures that the school's special education program will be both rigorous and responsive, establishing systems that support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional development of all scholars. Additionally, his skill in building staff capacity through professional development will strengthen the entire instructional team's ability to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Dr. Peterson's leadership will be vital in creating a culture of high expectations and academic excellence from the school's founding year forward.
- **LaTarsha White.** LaTarsha White, Ed.S., is a passionate educator and transformative leader with 18 years of experience dedicated to fostering academic excellence. Her extensive background in both general and special education has positioned her as a dynamic force in creating inclusive learning environments that support all students, particularly Black and Brown children. Her career spans a diverse range of roles, from teaching middle and high school students to leading as an administrator in various capacities. As a Special Education Coordinator at Intrepid College Prep Academy, she ensured compliance with state and federal regulations, developed and monitored Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and led Response to Intervention (RTI) initiatives to support diverse learners. This role solidified her expertise in advocating for students with disabilities and designing systems that provide access to education. In her leadership roles—including Middle School Assistant Principal of

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Instruction and Elementary Assistant Principal of Culture—LaTarsha championed data-driven strategies that led to measurable student growth. She implemented research-based teaching practices, professional development for educators, and restorative discipline frameworks to enhance student engagement and success. Her work at Republic High School as a Principal in Residence further showcases her ability to drive academic excellence through strategic planning, faculty development, and school culture initiatives. Beyond her administrative leadership, LaTarsha has been instrumental in curriculum development, blended learning integration, and fostering inclusive school communities. Her dedication to dismantling systemic disparities is evident in her approach to leadership, ensuring that every student, regardless of background or ability, has access to a high-quality education. Currently pursuing a doctoral degree in K-12 Administration at Trevecca University, LaTarsha continues to refine her expertise to further impact educational policies and practices. With a steadfast commitment to excellence and advocacy, she remains a transformative leader in the field of education, dedicated to empowering students and supporting educators in creating lasting change.

Detailed Staffing Plan. Descriptions of staff by role and number, including support staff, that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) plans to hire to address the needs of special populations follow.

Special Education Teachers. In Year 1, Novus SMART Academy will employ two Licensed Special Education Teachers who will ensure our students with disabilities and at-risk students receive access to high-quality instruction and support. We will also hire a Licensed Gifted Education Teacher who will ensure our intellectually gifted students receive access to high-quality instruction and enrichment support. Our special populations team will ensure all practices align with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, and Tennessee State Board of Education policies. They will maintain accurate, timely documentation of IEPs, progress reports, and service logs for compliance and accountability, and participate in state-mandated professional learning and development to remain current on special education regulations and best practices. Special Education Teachers will regularly collect, monitor, and analyze scholars' academic and behavioral data to identify needs and track progress, and use formative and summative assessments to evaluate student performance against IEP goals. Special Education Teachers will be managed by the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to develop, update, and monitor Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in compliance with TNDOE guidelines. They will also collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to ensure Project Play Therapy delivers specialized services as prescribed by IEPs, such speech therapy, occupational therapy, direct behavior services, counseling services (in addition to the school-based counseling provided by our School Counselor), and a range of psychological services. These contracted services are essential in ensuring that our scholars receive comprehensive, targeted support that aligns with their prescribed service needs. Our Special Education Teachers will co-plan and co-teach in the inclusion classroom settings to ensure instruction meets diverse learning needs. They will provide accommodations, modifications, and differentiated strategies to help students succeed in the general education classroom, and will deliver a range of supports, from in-class assistance to pull-out interventions, tailored to students' IEP-mandated needs.

For at-risk students, Special Education Teachers will use multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and data-driven interventions to identify and address academic, social-emotional, and behavioral challenges. They will collaborate with teachers and support staff to design and implement individualized interventions for students showing signs of learning deficiencies. Special Education Teachers will track the effectiveness of interventions and adjust strategies based on student response to ensure continuous improvement using FastBridge. Through the collaboration and guidance of the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, Special Education Teachers will coordinate contracted services to connect at-risk students to external resources and supports.

For our intellectually-gifted students, our Licensed Gifted Education Teacher will identify gifted students through data analysis and ensure that their learning needs are met through differentiated instruction and advanced learning opportunities. Our Licensed Gifted Education Teacher will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to design rigorous, project-based learning and enrichment activities, and develop and implement IEPs or Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) for intellectually gifted students, as required by the TNDOE.

ESL Teachers. All services provided by Licensed ESL teachers will align with the English Language Development Proficiency Standards Framework and the Tennessee Department of Education policies for ELs. ESL teachers will use research-based practices to ensure all ELs progress toward language proficiency and academic success. In Year 1, Novus SMART Academy will employ two Licensed ESL Teachers who will provide targeted support to ELs and those ELs who identify as at-risk students. These teachers will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and other instructional team members to meet the unique academic, linguistic, and social-emotional needs of these students while ensuring compliance with the Tennessee Department of Education guidelines. The ESL Teachers will assess scholars' English language development proficiency using state-approved English Language Proficiency Assessment and classroom performance data, and will regularly monitor progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to identify growth areas and adjust instruction accordingly. The ESL Teachers will develop ILPs tailored to each ELs' needs, outlining specific goals for language acquisition and academic performance, and facilitate ILP meetings with scholars, families, and relevant school staff to review progress and adjust goals. In Year 1, one of the ESL Teachers will co-plan and co-teach literacy and math lessons within the inclusion classrooms and will implement strategies to support content learning and language

development simultaneously. The other ESL Teacher will provide direct, targeted instruction in a Structured English Immersion (SEI) classroom to address foundational language skills. This ESL Teacher will collaborate with a Teacher-in-Residence to deliver small-group and individualized instruction aligned with students' ILPs.

For at-risk students, ESL Teachers will use multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and data-driven interventions to identify and address academic, social-emotional, and behavioral challenges. They will collaborate with teachers and support staff to design and implement individualized interventions for students showing signs of learning deficiencies. ESL Teachers will track the effectiveness of interventions and adjust strategies based on student response to ensure continuous improvement using FastBridge. Through the collaboration and guidance of the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, ESL Teachers will coordinate contracted services to connect at-risk students to external resources and supports to ensure at-risk EL students can access grade-level content while developing English proficiency.

Structured English Immersion (appropriate for all levels, particularly level 1). Structured English Immersion (SEI) is a technique for rapidly increasing the language proficiency of ELs. Many SEI programs provide some bilingual support. The hallmark of this program is that the focus is on English, not specific content, for extended periods of time. Teachers may use strategies such as graphic organizers, visuals, gestures, and realia to support comprehension. Students are encouraged to produce language to demonstrate communication. Traditional English language development (ELD) classes are often considered Structured English Immersion courses. Structured English Immersion courses are common in middle and high school programs for students who have difficulty accessing content in an English-only classroom. ELs should be with grade-level peers when appropriate, and where linguistic needs are met. Structured English Immersion is often used as a newcomer program for ELs. During this first year, basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) are the focus. As students learn the basic communication skills needed, the goal of the program shifts to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). During that phase, general subject area vocabulary and structures will be taught. Newcomer programs are effective and designed to be short-term so that students learning English do not generally spend more than six months to an academic year outside of a typical classroom with peers. Many programs make this determination based on literacy. A beginner in English might spend six months, but a student who has no literacy in any language might spend a year in the newcomer program.

School Counselors and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement in the Role of MTSS-Behavior Coordinators. At Novus SMART Academy, our School Counselor will work closely and collaboratively with the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to serve as the MTSS-Behavior Coordinators, leading the development, execution, and continuous improvement of our Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavior (MTSS-Behavior) for all scholars. They will support instructional staff by providing ongoing professional learning focused on the implementation of the CharacterStrong framework, which includes research-based, tiered behavioral interventions. Their joint efforts will extend to identifying and addressing the unique behavioral needs of students with disabilities, English Learners, at-risk students, and intellectually gifted scholars. The School Counselor and Assistant Principal will organize and facilitate regular MTSS-Behavior team meetings to promote cross-disciplinary collaboration and ensure comprehensive support for scholars. They will guide staff in analyzing and using academic, behavioral, and social-emotional data to inform decisions about student interventions and classroom management strategies. Additionally, they will support teachers in identifying students who need Tier II and Tier III interventions and will monitor progress to ensure students receive targeted support. In collaboration with instructional staff, they will assist in selecting and implementing evidence-based interventions and differentiated strategies appropriate for a range of student needs using the CharacterStrong framework. They will also coordinate with ESL Teachers, Special Education Teachers, and Gifted Education Teacher to ensure that MTSS-Behavior interventions align with scholars IEPs and/or ILPs. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will take the lead in conducting classroom observations to assess the fidelity of MTSS-Behavior implementation, providing coaching and feedback to refine instructional practices and intervention strategies. Together, the School Counselor and Assistant Principal will engage families in understanding the MTSS-Behavior process and their critical role in supporting their children's learning. They will also serve as liaisons between the school and community-based resources, ensuring that scholars and families have access to additional supports as needed.

Licensed Teachers and Teachers-in-Residency. To effectively support students with disabilities, ELs, at-risk students, and intellectually gifted students in the general education classroom, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will provide professional learning and development alongside the special populations team on how to implement targeted strategies through small group instruction and personalized learning paths using IXL for Reading and Math. The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will use diagnostic data from IXL to create flexible small groups based on each student's specific learning needs, skill gaps, or enrichment opportunities. They will tailor instruction to the unique needs of each group, ensuring that materials and activities are accessible and appropriately challenging. For students with disabilities, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will collaborate with Special Education Teachers to focus on IEP-aligned goals, leveraging multisensory techniques and scaffolded supports. For EL students, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will incorporate language development strategies such as sentence frames, visual aids, and vocabulary supports. For at-risk students, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will collaborate with Special Education Teachers to provide focused remediation on foundational skills to close learning gaps. For intellectually gifted students, the

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will collaborate with the Gifted Education Teacher to design enrichment activities that extend learning and promote critical thinking. The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will also regularly assess progress and reconfigure groups as needed to ensure ongoing alignment with student needs.

The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will use IXL's adaptive diagnostics to identify students' strengths and areas for improvement in Reading and Math. The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will assign personalized learning paths within IXL that adapt to each student's pace and performance. For students with disabilities, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will assign lessons that include visual and auditory supports to meet accessibility needs. For ELs, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will include lessons with language supports to build both content knowledge and English proficiency. For at-risk students, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will provide foundational skill lessons that address learning gaps. For intellectually gifted students, the Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will offer advanced lessons that challenge and engage higher-order thinking skills. The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will monitor students' engagement and performance on IXL activities, using data to guide further instruction and intervention.

The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will partner with special education teachers, ESL teachers, and other support staff to ensure strategies and interventions are aligned with individual student plans (e.g., IEPs, ,ILPs, 504 Plans). Our school's instructional leadership team will provide ongoing professional learning and development to all instructional staff on how to effectively support Tier I instruction with the implementation of small group instruction and IXL tools.

Inclusion Classroom. In the inclusion classroom, the special education teacher and/or ESL teacher will push into the classroom to support instruction, which will give scholars in the inclusion classroom a greater opportunity to learn in smaller groups with their peers. The Licensed Teachers and Teacher-in-Residence will share the responsibility of planning and teaching lessons with the special education teacher and/or ESL teacher, collecting and analyzing scholar academic data to inform instruction, identifying scholars with learning deficiencies as evidenced by data, and monitoring progress over time. With our current special populations projections of 25% identified as scholars with disabilities or intellectually gifted and 35% identified as ELs, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will hire teachers and staff as outlined in Figure 34. Should Novus SMART Academy (K-8) exceed our anticipated special populations projections in Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director will collaborate with the Finance Committee and back-office financial services provider to adjust the budget to accommodate increased staffing needs for an additional Special Education Teacher, ESL Teacher, or Gifted Education Teacher. After collaboration with the Finance Committee and back-office financial services provider, the budget will be submitted for approval by the Board of Directors. Similarly, if our population of scholars with special needs exceeds our projections in any year, we will adjust our budget and staffing plan to provide additional support as needed for our scholars.

Figure 34 - School-Based Staff to Support Special Populations

Staff	Type	K-1 192 scholars enrolled	K-2 288 scholars enrolled	K-3 384 scholars enrolled	K-4 480 scholars enrolled	K-5 576 scholars enrolled
		2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Proposed Executive Director	Licensed	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Assistant Principals	Licensed	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Special Education Teachers	Licensed	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
ESL Teachers	Licensed	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
Gifted Education Teacher	Licensed	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
School Counselors in the Role of MTSS-Behavior Coordinator	Licensed	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Licensed Teachers	Licensed	8.0	12.0	16.0	20.0	24.0
Teacher-in-Residency	Classified	9.0	13.0	17.0	21.0	25.0
Related Arts Teachers	Classified	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.0

Section 1.8 - Special Populations (Required for All Sponsors)						
Office Manager	Classified	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Office Secretary	Classified	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will provide professional learning and development for teachers and school leaders on co-planning and co-teaching strategies in the inclusion classroom, providing appropriate accommodations and modifications, MTSS-Academics and Behavior, small group instruction, and understanding the anatomy of an IEP, ILP, and 504 Plan for successful implementation of services.

Criteria for interviewing teachers, school leaders, and staff members include but are not limited to the following steps:

1. Candidates must complete the online application.
2. The Proposed Executive Director will review all applications.
    1. The Proposed Executive Director will verify candidates who are applying for teacher, school leader, and/or staff member positions that require a state licensure as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Only candidates who are fully licensed or currently enrolled in a Teacher Education Program will be considered for positions that require a license.
    2. The Proposed Executive Director will conduct a public search on the Tennessee Department of Education website to look up candidates' licensure information[80]. When the information cannot be found, or appears to be inactive, then the Proposed Executive Director will take an extra step to verify credentials and licensure with candidates before moving them forward in the interview process.
3. Eligible candidates will be contacted by the Proposed Executive Director to complete an initial phone interview. Ineligible candidates will receive an email explaining why they will not continue through the interview process.
    1. Eligible candidates who completed a successful initial phone interview will receive an email with a task tailored to the positions they applied for with directions and timelines for submission. Ineligible candidates will receive an email explaining why they will not continue through the interview process.
    2. Once candidates submit their tasks, all materials will be reviewed by the Proposed Executive Director in preparation for the final in-person interview. For tasks that are not submitted with quality, these candidates will receive an email explaining why they will not continue through the interview process. Members of the Board of Directors may be asked to participate on the final interview panel; however, the final decision to offer positions to candidates will be at the sole discretion of the Proposed Executive Director.

Section 1.8b: Describe the process and methods by which the school will properly identify students with disabilities in compliance with Title 49, Chapter 10, of the Tennessee Code, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to ensuring compliance with Title 49, Chapter 10, of the Tennessee Code; Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We will use a comprehensive and strategic approach to properly identify scholars with disabilities, ensuring that all steps align with these legal frameworks while avoiding misidentification or overidentification. Title 49, Chapter 10, of the Tennessee Code, Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 govern special education programs for students with disabilities in Tennessee and requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to eligible students. As an LEA, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will locate, identify, and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities as an obligation of Child Find. The evaluation process must be conducted by a multidisciplinary team using valid, reliable, and non-discriminatory instruments and techniques. The specific evaluation process timeline required for identifying students with disabilities in compliance with federal law (Part B of IDEA) and Tennessee law (Title 49, Chapter 10) can be initiated by a parent, teacher, or other professional when a student is suspected of having a disability. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will promptly review the referral and determine if an evaluation is warranted. After the referral, the school must obtain written, informed consent from the parent to begin the evaluation process and the evaluation cannot proceed without this consent. The evaluation must be completed within 60 calendar days from the date we receive parental consent for the evaluation. Tennessee adheres to the federal 60-day requirement unless specific state regulations impose stricter timelines. After the evaluation is completed, the multidisciplinary team will meet to determine eligibility for special education and related services. The eligibility determination meeting is typically held within a week of the evaluation's completion.

If the scholar is found eligible for special education services, an IEP must be developed within 30 calendar days of the eligibility determination meeting. Re-evaluations must occur at least once every three years or sooner if requested by the parent or team. Re-evaluations can also be conducted earlier if there is a change in the student's needs or educational placement. Eligible scholars must meet criteria under one or more of the state-defined disability categories, and parents must be informed of their rights and provide consent for evaluations and services. Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a Federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities (ages 3-21), and establishes guidelines for identifying, evaluating, and providing special education services.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

The Child Find mandate requires all schools to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities residing in their jurisdiction. This includes children who are homeless, wards of the state, or in private schools. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will conduct comprehensive evaluations to determine eligibility, ensure re-evaluations occur every three years or sooner if needed, and that assessments must be non-discriminatory and provided in the child's native language. To be eligible, scholars must meet one of IDEA's disability categories, such as Autism, Specific Learning Disability, and/or Emotional Disturbance, and require special education as a result. Parents must also provide informed consent for evaluations and be active participants in eligibility and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a Federal civil rights law prohibiting discrimination based on disability and applies to all students with disabilities in institutions receiving federal funding, including public schools. Key provisions related to identification are a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., learning, reading, concentrating). Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will identify and evaluate students suspected of having a disability that impacts major life activities, even if they don't qualify under IDEA. Evaluations will be thorough and consider various sources of data (e.g., teacher observations, medical diagnoses, standardized tests). Some scholars may receive a 504 Plan, which provides accommodations to ensure equal access to education, but does not necessarily require special education services.

Enrollment and Initial Identification. Upon enrollment, Novus SMART Academy will implement a detailed intake process involving scholars and their families. This process will determine appropriate placement in either a general education classroom or an inclusion classroom. For scholars previously receiving special education services, we will request educational records from their prior schools to confirm the existence of an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Before the academic year begins, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and the Proposed Executive Director will review these records to confirm active IEP, securely file scholar records in compliance with T.C.A. § 49-13-102, and ensure that the educational setting is fully prepared to deliver required services. If necessary, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will collaborate with special education staff to review and update IEP goals, ensuring that accommodations and modifications are in place to maintain high expectations for every scholar. We will have documented procedures for referrals, evaluations, and eligibility determinations.

Professional Learning and Development with Ongoing Monitoring. Teachers and school leaders will receive professional learning and development on identifying and supporting scholars with disabilities. Weekly professional learning and development sessions will focus on monitoring academic and behavioral progress, discussing scholar needs, and implementing evidence-based instructional strategies.

Data-Driven Identification Process. Internal assessments and scholar portfolios will provide key data points to guide instructional decisions. During weekly data meetings, staff will analyze academic performance and behavioral data, identify struggling scholars, and develop and implement targeted action plans using strategies such as prior knowledge activation, academic monitoring, modeling, and guided discourse. When evidence suggests a scholar is not meeting baseline academic or behavioral expectations, this data will prompt the initiation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) plan.

MTSS Implementation and Special Education Referrals. In accordance with the Tennessee Department of Education's RTI² Implementation Guide, scholars demonstrating insufficient progress after Tier II and Tier III interventions will be reviewed in a data team meeting. If the data supports further action, a special education referral will be initiated. This process includes communicating with families via phone and written notice to arrange a meeting regarding the referral and conducting comprehensive evaluations to ensure accurate identification. There will be regular reporting to the Tennessee Department of Education on identification, evaluation, and service delivery, and we will have transparent communication with parents regarding the evaluation process, eligibility, and available services.

Avoiding Misidentification and Overidentification. Novus SMART Academy will adhere to data-driven protocols to mitigate risks of misidentification or overidentification. We will avoid common errors as outlined by the RTI² Implementation Guide, such as over-reliance on subjective observations or insufficient data. Regular training and adherence to evidence-based practices will ensure accuracy in identifying scholars with disabilities.

Section 1.8c: Explain how the school will offer a continuum of services, ensure appropriate access to the general education program, and support academic success for students with disabilities and students with low incident disabilities. Describe specifically how the school plans to integrate special education services into the school's daily schedule.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure that all scholars have access to high-quality academic instruction using specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies that will employ a continuum of services, ensuring our special education scholars have access to the general education curriculum and academic success. Our Special Education Teachers will work alongside our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access in partnership with the multidisciplinary team to consider a scholar's least restrictive environment (LRE) for each portion of the school day. Our academic program will function daily as follows:

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **General education with no services.** We will provide general education with no services as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education's Special Education Framework. Teachers will use data to determine which research-based strategies, scaffolds, and/or accommodations to implement to plan for scholars' anticipated misconceptions during instructional delivery to close existing achievement gaps.
- **General education with additional supports.** We will provide general education with additional supports as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education's Special Education Framework. Our Special Education Teachers will push into the Two-Teacher Model classroom to provide push-in instructional support as a third teacher in the classroom. For push-in instruction, all three teachers will provide Tier I instruction in the inclusion classroom setting using one of the co-teaching strategies outlined in Section 1.3b (i.e., team teaching, alternate teaching, and/or station teaching). Accommodations we will provide include, but are not limited to, the following (in addition to those outlined in a scholar's IEP):
    - Build background knowledge or content knowledge by looking ahead at what scholars will be learning and provide them with resources to increase their knowledge before teaching new content.
    - Provide scholars with extended time to think through their responses or to complete independent instructional tasks.
    - Use visuals to increase vocabulary, conceptual knowledge, and/or to develop stories in context.
    - Use repetition, rhythm and rhyme so that scholars can repeat what teachers say to increase speaking and listening skills.
    - Use scaffolds, such as graphic organizers and anchor charts, to reinforce learning and comprehension.
    - Use of oral presentation (i.e., Read-Aloud).

Our Special Education Teachers will support our scholars within the general education curriculum to provide instruction, scaffolds, and/or accommodations. Our Special Education Teachers will also collaborate with our ls and Teacher-in-Residences to provide planning assistance, answer scholar-specific questions, and to proactively problem-solve difficulties within the classroom that will support academic success over time. If a scholar receives consultation services only, the multidisciplinary team will conduct a re-evaluation to determine if special education services are appropriate for such scholars.

Special education support in a separate classroom for a portion of the day. Should data demonstrate the need for special education support in a separate classroom for a portion of the day, our instructional leadership team will work with our Special Education Teachers and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to develop a strategic academic plan to ensure high-quality academic instruction is sustained to support these scholars as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education's Special Education Framework. The multidisciplinary team will use data to determine provisions for direct special education services in the inclusion classroom, and in some cases, provisions for direct special education services exclusively in the special education setting. Direct education services will be provided based on services outlined in the IEP, which could include, but not limited to any of the following:

- Speech and language therapy in the general education setting and/or special education setting.
- Paraprofessional support in the general education setting and/or the special education setting.
- Pull-out services in the special education setting for English/Language Arts and Math instruction.

Our Special Education Teachers will provide the most intensive intervention for scholars with disabilities who receive special education support in a separate classroom for a portion of the day to address their specific IEP deficits. We will use specially designed instruction (SDI) to deliver intensive intervention. SDI is defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as adapting appropriately to the needs of an eligible child under this part- the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction- to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum. As prescribed by a scholar's IEP, we will provide SDI to support their academic, behavioral, and/or social development, provided by our Special Education Teachers in a co-teaching instructional learning setting. Scholars may also receive this level of intervention in one or more settings through one or more sessions a day. Service delivery may be a combination of special education supports within the general education setting and specialized instruction within academic and non-academic portions of the school day. The location, frequency, and duration of each special education service will be decided by the multidisciplinary team on an individual basis.

Deficit-based Intervention Services. At Novus SMART Academy, we are committed to providing every scholar, especially those identified in our special populations, with the targeted support they need to succeed. Our approach to special education includes deficit-based intervention services, which are grounded in data-driven decision-making and aligned to each scholar's prescribed services plan. These *d*eficit-based intervention services refer to focused educational supports designed to address specific academic or behavioral skill gaps. These services do not define students by their challenges, but rather recognize learning deficits that can be remedied through intensive, research-based instruction. These interventions supplement, not replace, the high-quality Tier I instruction all scholars receive. Within our MTSS model for Academics and Behavior, scholars are identified for deficit-based services through diagnostic tools and universal screeners. Based on the results, interventions are delivered through Tier II supports (small-group instruction for students slightly below grade level) or **Tier III supports** (intensive, individualized help for students significantly below grade level). Ongoing **progress monitoring** ensures that interventions are effective and adjusted as needed to accelerate growth.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

At Novus SMART Academy, our Special Populations Team, led by our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, will provide direct, data-informed instruction to scholars identified for deficit-based intervention services. These services may include developmental, corrective, and supportive interventions, each aligned with the scholar's IEP goals. Our team is deeply committed to delivering instruction, accommodations, and supports with fidelity and accountability. Within the RTI² framework, General Education Teachers can play a vital role in delivering deficit-based interventions, particularly in Tier II settings. With proper training and support, they will be equipped to implement research-based strategies with fidelity. However, for scholars receiving special education services under IDEA, interventions will be delivered by qualified Special Education Teachers in accordance with each scholar's IEP.

To further enhance our in-house capacity, we will contract with Project Play Therapy, a trusted provider of specialized related services. Project Play Therapy will deliver a comprehensive range of core services, including Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, and Psychological Services, along with specialized services as required by individual IEPs. These specialized supports include Hearing and Auditory Services, Vision Services, Physical Therapy, Music Therapy, Bilingual Spanish Evaluations, Behavioral Health Services, and Counseling Services. All services will be provided in strict accordance with IEP specifications and in compliance with IDEA regulations.

In addition to these offerings, school-based Nursing and Health Services will be delivered through our proposed partnership with Express Healthcare Staff. These supports are critical for ensuring a safe, inclusive environment where scholars can fully engage in learning (see Attachment W). Our commitment to providing high-quality, specialized support is reflected in our Year 1–5 budget, which includes projected expenses and formal quotes from service providers. This documentation, including a statement from Dr. Cindy Minnis, Vice President of Clinical and School Services at Project Play Therapy, can be found in Attachment W. Together, these coordinated efforts ensure that every scholar at Novus SMART Academy, particularly those requiring additional support, receives the tailored interventions they need to reach their full potential.

Self-contained Placement. Should data demonstrate the need for self-contained placement of any scholar, our instructional leadership team will work with our Special Education Teacher(s) and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to develop a strategic academic plan to ensure high-quality academic instruction is sustained to support our scholars with disabilities who are the moderate-to-sever spectrum, who require an alternative curriculum, and who require one-on-one education assistance. Our Proposed Executive Director will also provide guidance to our Special Education Teachers and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access on how to coordinate services and purposeful placement of scholars with disabilities who require a separate special education school, residential placement, or home/hospital placement. Post-authorization, we will partner with Rutherford County Schools to determine best practices for ensuring that these scholars and families receive proper placement for this continuum of services.

Homebound Services. Should data demonstrate the need for special education support with homebound services, our instructional leadership team will work with our Special Education Teachers and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to develop a strategic academic plan to ensure high-quality academic instruction is sustained to support these scholars as prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education's Special Education Framework. We will assist our scholars receiving homebound services with accessing the curriculum during their time of being physically or psychologically incapable of participating in regular classroom activities. Like our partners at Rutherford County Schools, we understand that homebound services are a temporary intervention, and that all scholars receiving these services should return on campus to receive high-quality academic instruction in their LRE as soon as possible.

Pursuant to IDEA Regulations at 34 C.F.R. §300.131, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will identify, locate, and evaluate all unilaterally-placed private-schooled and/or home-schooled scholars who were previously enrolled in our school[82]. If a unilaterally placed scholar is determined eligible as a scholar with a disability, we will provide this scholar with services by re-enrolling them in our school to receive special education and related services. If a scholar with a disability who previously attended a private school or home school returns to our school, we will conduct an IEP meeting and develop an appropriate IEP for that scholar. If a re-evaluation was not conducted while the scholar attended a private or home school, we will conduct a re-evaluation upon enrollment in our school. As with any re-evaluation, depending on the scholar's functioning, we may not be required to administer tests or other formal measures; however, our multidisciplinary team will thoroughly review all relevant data when determining a scholar 's evaluation needs.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s frequent internal assessment program will efficiently identify scholars who are struggling academically. On early release Wednesdays, teachers will review data in their content planning sessions. Interim assessments data will be the focus of our quarterly data analysis. Literacy rotation will include small group instruction, and blended learning will be prescribed according to interim data to ensure all scholars have an appropriately leveled group that most directly meets their academic needs. In Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will monitor all assessments data and meet with teachers daily to discuss Do Nows and Exit Tickets data and weekly quizzes within 24 hours of interim assessments and comprehensive exams. When our staff is at full scale, this will be the collaborative role of the instructional leadership team. The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director and/or the School Principal will prescribe interventions and document all action plans in scholar portfolios. We will review scholars' IEPs and progress annually and as necessary. Professional learning and

development for all teachers and school leaders will include special populations training, as well as additional training to maximize teacher and school leader effectiveness in preparing specific accommodations and modification with research-based and instructional strategies that work with scholars who have diverse learning styles. We will respond to common misconceptions with intentional focus and practices as described in Figure 35.

Figure 35 - Addressing Common Misconceptions with Focus and Practices

Common Misconceptions	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Focus and Practices
Special education is viewed as "fixing" struggling scholars.	ls and special education teachers will collaboratively participate in professional learning and development focusing on curricula, assessments, and research-based instructional strategies, including special education regulations. ls and special education teachers will engage in the analysis of data regarding interventions for struggling scholars.
Scholars from economically disadvantaged households are viewed as not "ready" for school.	Provide continual professional learning and development that addresses how to create a positive school environment via leadership, coaching, and mentoring.
There is limited information regarding intervention strategies for struggling scholars.	Provide targeted and embedded professional learning and development for teachers and school leaders regarding MTSS-Academics and Behavior, specifically research-based interventions, assessments, and progress monitoring.

The MTSS-Academics team will make a special education referral when the team determines a scholar is eligible to receive an initial evaluation for special education services. The special education referral will include but is not limited to the following details to ensure a comprehensive process for scholars and families (Figure 36).

Figure 36 - Special Education Referrals Considerations

Referral Considerations	Details
Vision and Hearing Form	Results from vision and hearing forms.
Communication to Families	Documentation of ongoing communication with scholars and families about progress in MTSS-Academics with a request for referral for services.
Ineffective Tier I, II, and III Interventions	Documented and data-based determination, prescribed in the Tennessee Department of Education RTI2 Manual.
Intervention Logs	Documentation located in scholars' MTSS-Academics folder.
MTSS-Academics Scholar Folder	Documentation of intervention used, frequency, attendance logs, duration of intervention, progress monitoring, ROI calculations, gap analysis, survey-level assessments, and fidelity checks.
Scholar Assessment Portfolio	Binder containing all assessment data from year and previous years for each scholar.
Documentation of the Concern	MTSS-Academics team meeting minutes documenting rationale for the decision to pursue special education services.
Special Education Evaluation Components and Reevaluation Components	Not limited to input from a school psychologist with documentation of testing results.

We will take the following steps to ensure the process is fair and focused on each individual scholar's success:

- Perform an educational evaluation with parental consent.
- If the scholar is eligible, develop an IEP.
- The multidisciplinary team will collaborate to agree on the goals, modifications, accommodations, and plan for the scholar to be successful at Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

- Continued progress monitoring of IEP goals.

We will ensure all scholars have access to high-quality academic instruction by securing partnerships with contracted services providers, such as (but not limited to) nurses, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, behavioral counselors, and others, based on the needs identified and included in the IEP and have been included in the proposed budget. We will design our teachers' schedules to preserve sufficient time for collaboration between ls, special education teachers, and school leaders. We will use collaboration time to prepare for instructional delivery and critical support for our special populations. In Years 1-5, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will lead Weekly 1:1 coaching sessions to provide inclusion teachers with the support needed for instruction with special populations.

Character Education through social-emotional learning and support is also an essential component of our mission and vision. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) believes a values-based school community leads to transformational results. Our daily communication with families through behavior logs will ensure our families are informed about their scholars' behavior in the classroom. The Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, and teachers will record scholar behavioral data in PowerSchool, FastBridge, and other management and communication systems that we will employ over time. Teachers and school leaders will record behavior management color changes for scholars, parent communications, parent conferences, and any scholar behavior data. PowerSchool and FastBridge will allow our school team to pull reports and categorize behavior incidents to document in our MTSS-Behavior process.

Section 1.8d: Explain the school's plan to monitor and evaluate the progress and success of students with disabilities. Detail how this plan coordinates with the authorizer's monitoring and evaluation plans.

One of the major priorities and responsibilities of the Board of Directors at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is to ensure that the Proposed Executive Director holds school-based staff accountable for maintaining full compliance with all regulatory requirements while fostering a safe and supportive learning environment for every scholar. This commitment includes adherence to state laws, authorizer accountability measures, and best practices that ensure scholars with IEPs receive a high-quality academic experience. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is fully dedicated to compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and T.C.A. § 49-13-102, guaranteeing that scholars with disabilities receive the necessary support to thrive academically and socially.

To promote the academic, social, and emotional success of scholars with disabilities, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all eligible students. The academy is committed to ensuring compliance with federal laws, including IDEA, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, to provide individualized supports and access to a high-quality education. In alignment with the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) principle, scholars with disabilities will be integrated into general education settings to the greatest extent appropriate, as specified in their IEPs. Additionally, Novus SMART Academy will adhere to the Child Find mandate by identifying, locating, and evaluating students suspected of having disabilities to ensure they receive necessary services and interventions promptly.

IDEA Disciplinary Protections for Students with Disabilities. Recognizing that students with disabilities are entitled to additional protections under IDEA when facing disciplinary action, Novus SMART Academy has established policies and procedures that align with federal and state laws to prevent unjust exclusion of these scholars from their educational opportunities. When a scholar with a disability engages in behavior that may warrant disciplinary action, a structured and legally compliant process is followed to determine appropriate interventions and supports. At all times, Novus SMART Academy upholds students' rights to FAPE, ensuring that any removal from the educational setting is consistent with IDEA requirements.

If a scholar with a disability faces disciplinary removal for more than ten consecutive school days or a series of removals that constitute a pattern, we will convene a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) to assess whether the behavior was a manifestation of the scholar's disability. This review will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team, which includes the scholar's parents, Licensed Teacher, Special Education Teacher, and relevant service providers. The team will carefully examine whether the conduct in question is directly related to the disability or if it resulted from the school's failure to implement the student's IEP. If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the scholar's disability, Novus SMART Academy will take immediate corrective actions by implementing the interventions or making necessary revisions related to behavioral intervention in the best interest of the scholar. This includes conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), developing or modifying a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), and ensuring that the student continues to receive educational services as required under IDEA.

If the team determines that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, we may move forward with disciplinary actions in the same manner as it would for scholars without disabilities. However, even in these cases, the scholar must continue to receive educational services to enable participation in the general education curriculum and progress toward IEP goals, in accordance with IDEA's disciplinary protections. In situations where a scholar poses a

significant danger to themselves or others, Novus SMART Academy may seek placement in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, as permitted under IDEA's special circumstances provisions, such as incidents involving weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury.

Novus SMART Academy will ensure that all due process protections are upheld by providing families with prior written notice of disciplinary decisions and informing them of their right to challenge such decisions through IDEA's procedural safeguards. Our school will actively collaborate with families to support scholars and seek disciplinary resolutions that prioritize intervention over exclusion. Additionally, all staff members will receive ongoing professional learning and development on IDEA disciplinary protections, positive behavioral supports, and de-escalation strategies to foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

By adhering to these principles, Novus SMART Academy will uphold the rights of students with disabilities, ensuring that disciplinary practices are legally sound and focused on student growth and success. Our commitment extends beyond compliance, embracing a proactive approach that emphasizes early intervention, restorative practices, and the continuous cultivation of a school culture that prioritizes inclusion and individualized support.

Commitment to Legal and Educational Standards. Novus SMART Academy will ensure that every scholar identified with a disability, or those suspected of having a disability, will receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school will strictly adhere to all relevant state and federal statutes as follows:

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Ensuring that scholars with disabilities receive specialized instruction tailored to their unique needs.
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Guaranteeing equal access to educational programs and services.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974: Providing accommodations to remove barriers to participation in general education.

Novus SMART Academy is dedicated to educating scholars in the least restrictive environment (LRE), integrating them with their general education peers whenever appropriate and as determined by their IEPs. Scholars identified as needing special education and related services will go through the Child Find process, in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 300.111, to ensure timely identification, location, and evaluation.

Enrollment Practices. Novus SMART Academy's application and enrollment policies are nondiscriminatory. Our mission and vision ensure all scholars, regardless of academic performance, behavior, socioeconomic status, or cultural background, are supported in achieving their highest potential. Scholars with disabilities will not face any barriers in accessing the educational opportunities provided by Novus SMART Academy.

Instructional Strategies and Service Delivery. To meet the diverse needs of scholars with disabilities, Novus SMART Academy will ensure scholars primarily receive services within an inclusive classroom setting, fostering interaction with general education peers while ensuring their academic and behavioral needs are addressed. When necessary, scholars will access a more restrictive environment in accordance with their IEP service requirements. Academic instruction and behavioral interventions will be customized to address specific deficits, promoting critical and creative thinking skills. Guided by the belief that all scholars can achieve, Novus SMART Academy will design programs and services that reflect high expectations. Key Components of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan are in Figure 37 as follows:

Figure 37 - Key Components of Monitoring and Evaluation

Key Components of Monitoring and Evaluation	
Progress Monitoring	• Implement regular assessments aligned with IEP goals to evaluate academic, behavioral, and social-emotional progress. • Utilize data-driven strategies to adjust interventions and supports as needed.

Collaboration and Coordination with Rutherford County Schools	• Maintain open communication with the authorizer, submitting reports.
	  ○ IDEA, Section 504, and ADA compliance.
	  ○ Child Find efforts, IEP development, and service delivery outcomes.
	• Participate in site visits and audits conducted by the authorizer.
	• Novus SMART Academy will also ensure alignment with the authorizer's monitoring and evaluation framework as follows:
	• Submit compliance documentation to demonstrate adherence to state and federal regulations, and provide evidence of progress in meeting IEP goals and supporting scholars with disabilities.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations (Required for All Sponsors)	
	• Participate in authorizer reviews by engaging in site visits, audits, and periodic assessments to evaluate program quality and compliance. • Engage in feedback sessions by collaborating with the authorizer to identify opportunities for improvement and address challenges.
Data Review	• Convene a multidisciplinary team, including special and ls, administrators, and interventionists, to analyze progress. • Use findings to identify trends, celebrate successes, and address gaps in service delivery.

Professional Development	• Provide ongoing professional learning and development for teachers and staff.
	  ○ Evidence-based instructional practices.
	  ○ Behavioral intervention strategies.
	  ○ Compliance requirements and best practices for special education.

Stakeholder Engagement	• Involve families in the development, review, and updates of IEPs through regular, transparent communication. • Empower families with resources to support scholars at home.

Annual Program Evaluation	• Conduct yearly evaluations of the special education program, incorporating feedback.
	  ○ The authorizer.
	  ○ Families.
	  ○ Educators and support staff.
	• Use evaluations to refine services, align with evolving best practices, and address identified challenges.

Section 1.8e: If serving high school grades, describe how the school will determine which diploma type is appropriate for individual students with a disability. Detail how the school will ensure that students with a disability are not precluded from earning a traditional high school diploma.

Not Applicable

Section 1.8f: Describe the process and methods for identifying English learners (EL) in compliance with SBE Rule 0520-01-19-.03. Describe the plan to ensure the school is appropriately staffed to maintain Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) and support EL students' academic success. Detail the plan to monitor and track the ratio of ESL-licensed staff to maintain one licensed ESL teacher for every 35 EL students.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow a comprehensive, compliant, and student-centered approach to identifying English learners (ELs), supporting their academic success through individualized planning, and ensuring appropriate staffing aligned with Tennessee State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-19-.03. Our plan encompasses rigorous initial identification procedures, consistent monitoring of student progress, dedicated staffing to meet state-mandated service ratios, and a commitment to high-quality instruction aligned with the Tennessee English Language Development (ELD) Standards.

Identification of English Learners (EL). To identify English learners, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement the state-required two-step process. During initial enrollment, each scholar's parent or guardian will complete a Home Language Survey (HLS), which is administered one time in the student's educational career. The HLS includes questions designed to determine whether a language other than English is spoken at home or has influenced the student's language development. This includes questions such as the first language the student learned, the language most often spoken at home, and the language most often spoken to the student. The HLS is explained thoroughly to families in a language they understand, and translated copies or interpreters will be provided as needed. Completed surveys are retained in the student's cumulative folder and digital records and transferred with the scholar if they change schools. If the HLS indicates a language other than English, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will screen the student for English proficiency using the ELPA21 Dynamic Screener within 30 calendar days of enrollment during the beginning of the school year, or within 14 calendar days for students enrolling mid-year[83].

ELPA21 Dynamic Screener. The ELPA21 Dynamic Screener will be administered by our Licensed ESL Teachers. For kindergarten scholars screened in the first semester, any score below level 3 in a non-exempt language domain (listening, speaking, reading, or writing) qualifies the student as an EL. For scholars screened in the second semester of kindergarten or in grades 1–8, a score below level 4 in any domain qualifies the student as an EL. Once identified, scholars will be coded

accordingly in the our Student Information System (SIS) and the state's Education Information System (EIS) as "L" for English Learner[84]. Parents will be notified of their child's EL status and rights to services within the prescribed timeframe. If a student transfers from another Tennessee district or another state, prior screening and proficiency data will be used when available to avoid redundant testing and to ensure continuity of services.

Maintaining ILPs and Supporting EL Academic Success. Once a scholar is identified as an English Learner, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will create an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) that outlines specific academic and language goals for the student. The ILP includes ELPA21 assessment data, proficiency levels in each language domain, a description of instructional supports and accommodations needed to access grade-level content, and a trajectory for expected language growth. ILPs will be developed by our Licensed ESL Teachers with guidance from our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, and input from our Licensed General Education Teachers and other relevant personnel. Parents will be engaged in the process and invited to review the plan and provide input as well. The ILP is a living document and will be reviewed and updated at least annually to reflect scholar progress, continued needs, and/or changes in service levels.

The academic success of English learners at Novus SMART Academy is further supported through a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) that includes access to core instruction aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards, enriched by the Tennessee ELD standards. Licensed ESL teachers will provide at least one hour of daily instruction specifically focused on English language development. Licensed General Education Teachers, trained annually in ESL instructional strategies and the use of scaffolding and linguistic accommodations by our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, will provide Indirect ESL Services throughout the school day, ensuring ELs can meaningfully engage in grade-level learning. The school's RTI²-Academics framework will include appropriate screening, progress monitoring, and tiered interventions tailored to EL students' unique language development and academic profiles.

To ensure alignment with the Tennessee Department of Education ESL Manual (October 2024) and State Board Rule 0520-01-19-.03, Novus SMART Academy will establish a clear and compliant process for developing and managing Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) for all identified English Learners (ELs). Once a scholar is identified as an EL through the state-mandated two-step identification process, via the Home Language Survey and ELPA21 Dynamic Screener, our Licensed ESL teacher will lead the development of the student's ILP. As outlined in the ESL Manual, the Licensed ESL Teacher is the primary person responsible for creating the ILP, ensuring that it is grounded in ELPA21 assessment data and aligned with the Tennessee English Language Development (ELD) standards.

The ILP will contain detailed, domain-specific English language proficiency levels, documentation of instructional supports, accommodations for classroom instruction and assessments, and short-term and long-term goals designed to move the scholar toward full English proficiency. It will also include a growth trajectory, which is a forward-looking plan projecting expected language development based on the student's initial placement data and ongoing performance. In accordance with the state's expectations, this plan is not static; it is a living document that will be reviewed and revised at least annually, or more frequently, if needed, to reflect scholar progress, changing needs, or service modifications.

Although our Licensed ESL Teachers will own and author the ILPs, the development process is collaborative. Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will provide oversight and strategic guidance to ensure that each ILP aligns with both legal requirements and schoolwide instructional expectations. Our Licensed General Education Teachers, who work with the EL scholars in the inclusion classroom daily, will contribute important classroom data such as formative assessments, academic progress, and instructional observations. These educators will play a key role in ensuring the ILP includes linguistically appropriate scaffolds that allow the scholar to access grade-level content in each subject area. Where relevant, other instructional staff, such as Licensed Special Education Teachers or our Teachers in Residence, may be consulted to align supports for ELs who also receive additional services in the Two-Educator classroom.

Parents and guardians will be actively engaged in the ILP process, as required by both state regulation and best practice. Communication will be provided in a language the family can understand, and families will be invited to participate in ILP review meetings, where they can share insights about the scholar's background, needs, and strengths. Their input will be incorporated into the plan to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance and to foster shared ownership of the scholar's language development goals.

The implementation of the ILP is supported through the school's multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), which includes access to high-quality, standards-aligned core instruction. This core instruction is enriched with embedded language supports tied to the Tennessee ELD Standards, ensuring that EL scholars are not only acquiring English but also mastering academic content. In alignment with State Board Rule 0520-01-19-.03(4), Licensed ESL Teachers at Novus SMART Academy will provide at least one hour of daily direct ESL instruction, focused on the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and targeted to the individual proficiency levels identified in each scholar's ILP. Simultaneously, our Licensed General Education Teachers and Teachers in Residence will receive professional learning and development annually in ESL instructional strategies and the appropriate use of accommodations by the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Finally, Novus SMART Academy's RTI²-Academics framework will include universal screeners, progress monitoring tools, and tiered interventions that are calibrated to the unique linguistic and academic profiles of EL scholars. Data collected through this system will be analyzed by the Licensed ESL Teacher to inform ILP revisions and ensure alignment between language development services and academic interventions. The school's commitment to data-informed instruction and collaborative ILP development will ensure that every EL scholar receives a comprehensive, tailored, and legally compliant education that supports both their language acquisition and academic success.

Monitoring the ESL Staffing Ratio (1:35). To ensure compliance with the staffing ratio requirement set by SBE Rule 0520-01-19-.03(4), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to maintaining a staffing model that includes at least one Licensed ESL teacher for every 35 identified EL students. Our school will establish a staffing database that tracks the number of enrolled EL students and ensures timely hiring of Licensed ESL Teachers as the student population grows. We are currently projecting an EL enrollment rate of 35% in Years 1-5, respectively with appropriate number of Licensed ESL Teachers included in the Attachment W: Operating Budget (i.e., 67 EL in Year 1 with 2 ESL Licensed Teachers; 101 EL in Year 2 with 3 Licensed ESL Teachers; 134 EL in Year 3 with 4 Licensed ESL Teachers; 168 EL in Year 4 with 5 Licensed ESL Teachers; and 202 EL in Year 5 with 6 Licensed ESL Teachers). The database will also be used to monitor and plan for trends in EL enrollment, enabling proactive recruitment and onboarding of licensed and qualified ESL Teachers. In the event of temporary fluctuations in EL enrollment that impact staffing ratios, the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will submit documentation to the Tennessee Department of Education and request an alternate staffing ratio waiver, if needed. To uphold instructional quality and ensure staff preparedness, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide ongoing professional learning and development for all educators delivering ESL services, both direct and indirect. Training will include effective instructional strategies for ELs and integration of ELD standards into content instruction. We will regularly evaluate the effectiveness of our ESL program through ELPA21 summative assessment data, formative classroom assessments, and progress toward ILP goals.

Section 1.8g: Describe the plan to ensure EL students receive supports as outlined in their ILPs and these supports are integrated into the school's daily schedule. Detail the process and methods for monitoring and evaluating EL students' progress toward completing the EL program.

At Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the provision of services to English Learner (EL) scholars is governed by the framework and expectations set forth in Tennessee Department of Education ESL Manual. Our school will carefully implement both direct and indirect ESL services, with a particular emphasis on the Structured English Immersion (SEI) program as one of its core delivery models for direct instruction. These services are strategically embedded in our school's model to ensure all EL scholars receive support tailored to their linguistic and academic development, as outlined in their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).

Direct Services in the Inclusion Classroom. Direct services for EL scholars in the inclusion classroom setting will be provided by a Licensed ESL Teacher with supports based on their respective ILPs. These services will amount to at least one hour of ESL instruction per day and delivered within the general education setting rather than in a stand-alone ESL classroom environment with a 150-minute ELA Block in Grades K-2; a 120-minute ELA Block in Grades 3-5, and a 90-minute ELA Block for Grades 6-8. Grades 6-8 will have a 60-minute ELA Block on Wednesdays (see Attachment B). In this inclusion model, direct services will be delivered through one or more of the following methods:

- Push-in Support: The Licensed ESL Teacher will enter the general education classroom to work directly with EL scholars during regular instruction. The ESL teacher may provide small group instruction, co-teach with the general education teacher, or offer targeted language development support while scholars engage with grade-level content.
- Pull-out Support (used sparingly): The Licensed ESL Teacher will pull scholars out of the general classroom for brief periods during the day to provide focused English language development instruction in a separate setting. This instruction still aligns with grade-level standards and focuses on the listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains.
- Co-teaching or Collaborative Models: The Licensed ESL Teacher will co-plan and co-deliver lessons alongside the General Education Teacher and Teacher in Residence to provide scaffolded support that integrates language and content instruction.

Regardless of the method used, direct services in the inclusion model are distinct from indirect services in that they are provided by a Licensed ESL Teacher and are explicitly focused on English language development as described in the scholar's ILP. These services are tracked, documented, and tailored to the scholar's current English proficiency level, as determined by the ELPA21 Dynamic Screener and annual assessments.

Structured English Immersion (SEI). At Novus SMART Academy (K–8), our goal is to ensure all English Learners (ELs) consistently receive direct services from a Licensed ESL Teacher. Each EL scholar will either be served within the inclusion classroom or placed in a Structured English Immersion (SEI) classroom, depending on their English proficiency level. Our teacher-to-scholar ratios meet the 1:35 guideline, and we will strategically assign Licensed ESL Teachers to ensure all ELs receive the direct services they need without overburdening our high-quality educators. Structured English Immersion (SEI)

is one of the approved models for delivering ESL services and is especially appropriate for ELs at beginning levels of English proficiency, including newcomers and scholars performing at Level 1. SEI instruction is delivered in English, with a strong focus on language development and integrated academic content. Unlike bilingual programs, SEI does not use the scholar's home language but relies on scaffolded instruction to build both English skills and academic knowledge.

At Novus SMART Academy, SEI is embedded within the school day through dedicated ELA Blocks: 150 minutes daily for Grades K–2, 120 minutes for Grades 3–5, and 90 minutes (plus 60 minutes on Wednesdays) for Grades 6–8. These blocks are co-taught by a Licensed ESL Teacher and a Teacher-in-Residence, following our two-educator classroom model to provide consistent, high-quality support. Importantly, EL scholars in the SEI model will not attend a separate general education ELA class. SEI serves as their primary ELA instruction, aligned with grade-level standards and tailored to their language development needs. This structure avoids duplication of coursework while ensuring scholars meet both academic and English language proficiency goals.

Indirect Services. In contrast to direct services, indirect ESL services are provided when a parent or guardian chooses to waive formal ESL instruction for their child. Even in the absence of direct instruction, federal and state laws, namely Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), and Tennessee state rules, require that we continue to provide appropriate language supports. Indirect services at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be implemented within the general education classroom by a Licensed General Education Teacher in collaboration with the Teacher in Residence. These educators are expected to use scaffolds and accommodations documented in the scholar's ILP to ensure meaningful access to academic content. Supports may include adjusted instructional materials, visual supports, peer assistance, and modifications to language demands during instruction and assessments. Although the scholar is not receiving dedicated English language instruction from a Licensed ESL Teacher, the ILP remains active and is revised as needed to reflect the scholar's language development and academic progress. It is important to note that scholars receiving indirect services must still participate in the annual ELPA21 Summative Assessment and remain classified as ELs until they meet the state-defined criteria for exit.

Monitoring and Evaluating Progress. To ensure the success of its English Learner (EL) scholars and to maintain alignment with Tennessee Department of Education requirements, Novus SMART Academy will implement a comprehensive, data-driven process for monitoring and evaluating each EL scholar's progress toward exiting the EL program. This process will be systematic, collaborative, and anchored in the standards and procedures outlined in the Tennessee ESL Manual, with specific attention to individual progress across all four language domains, as well as academic achievement in grade-level content.

Monitoring will begin with the development and ongoing use of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for every EL scholar. The ILP is a dynamic document created shortly after a scholar is identified as an EL through the ELPA21 Dynamic Screener. It includes a detailed analysis of the scholar's English proficiency levels across domains, as determined by the screener and updated annually through the ELPA21 Summative Assessment. The ILP outlines specific linguistic and academic goals tailored to the scholar's current proficiency level and projected growth trajectory. It also describes the scaffolds and accommodations the scholar needs to access grade-level content and participate meaningfully in the classroom. ILPs are created collaboratively by the Licensed ESL Teacher, General Education Teachers, the Teacher in Residence, and, when appropriate, support personnel such as interventionists or special education staff. Families are involved in the development of ILPs through parent meetings and translated communications, and their input is considered an essential component of the planning process.

Once the ILP is in place, Novus SMART Academy will implement a robust progress monitoring system to ensure EL scholars are making adequate gains toward English proficiency and academic success. Progress will be formally assessed at least quarterly using a combination of formative assessments, classroom performance data, interim benchmarks, and language development measures aligned to the ELPA21 standards. Teachers will document growth in the four language domains and evaluate whether the scholar is on track to meet the short-term and annual goals identified in the ILP. These checkpoints will include common formative assessments embedded in the school's curriculum, observational data collected through instructional walkthroughs, and regular review of scholar work samples. Additionally, teachers will conduct periodic language samples and performance tasks to gauge academic language use in both spoken and written forms.

Novus SMART Academy will also utilize the state-required ELPA21 Summative Assessment, administered annually to all EL scholars, as the primary benchmark for evaluating readiness to exit the ESL program. This summative assessment measures scholars' proficiency levels in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and provides achievement level descriptors that guide exit decisions. Scholars must reach the state-determined proficiency level across all domains to be considered eligible for exit. In Tennessee, scholars must achieve a composite score that reflects full English proficiency and the ability to access academic content without linguistic accommodations. When a scholar achieves this level, the Licensed ESL Teacher, in collaboration with the general education team and school leadership, will initiate the exit process.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Exiting the EL Program. Exiting a scholar from EL services is not an automatic or isolated decision. Novus SMART Academy(K-8) will convene a transition team composed of the ESL Teacher, the General Education Teacher(s), the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and, where possible, the scholar's parent or guardian. This team will review the scholar's ELPA21 scores, academic achievement data, classroom performance, and ILP documentation to confirm that the scholar no longer requires direct or indirect language support services. In some cases, particularly for borderline scholars, the team may determine that additional time or support is needed before exit, despite achieving a certain level of proficiency on the summative assessment.

After a scholar exits the ESL program, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will continue to monitor their academic progress for four years, in alignment with state and federal guidelines for Transitional ELs (T1–T4). During this monitoring phase, the scholar's teachers will continue to track performance through grades, assessment results, and teacher feedback to ensure that the scholar is successfully navigating academic content without the need for ESL accommodations. Should concerns arise during the transitional period, such as a drop in academic performance, difficulty in comprehension, or limited engagement, we will reconvene the support team to review whether additional interventions or a reclassification as an EL are warranted. All such decisions will be made using a preponderance of evidence, documented in alignment with Tennessee's reclassification guidelines, and communicated to the family in a language they understand.

Furthermore, our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access alongside the Licensed ESL Teachers will maintain a centralized monitoring log for all EL and transitional scholars, updated in real-time and reviewed monthly to ensure compliance with service delivery, ILP timelines, and exit documentation. This database will serve as a living tool to identify trends, address gaps in progress, and inform staffing needs. Teachers will receive quarterly data briefs that summarize individual scholar progress, program effectiveness, and areas requiring adjustment. Ongoing professional learning and development will be provided to staff by the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to ensure the consistent and accurate implementation of monitoring protocols and the interpretation of ELPA21 data for instructional planning.

In all phases of EL instruction and monitoring, Novus SMART Academy will prioritize rigor and responsiveness. The monitoring and evaluation process is not merely a compliance function; it is a tool for ensuring that EL scholars are progressing toward full academic integration and linguistic autonomy. Through detailed ILPs, targeted formative assessment, structured data reviews, and collaborative exit planning, the school will ensure that each EL scholar is on a clear, supported path to achieving English proficiency and academic success, ultimately preparing them for success in life and learning beyond Novus SMART Academy.

Section 1.8h: Describe the process and methods by which the school will appropriately identify at-risk students and specify how academic and behavioral data will aid in this identification. Describe the plan to monitor academic progress and address the learning needs of at-risk students. Detail the programs, strategies, and supports the school will use to ensure the success of at-risk students.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will utilize a structured and data-driven approach to identify scholars at risk of academic or behavioral challenges. By continuously analyzing academic and behavioral data, the school will promptly identify scholars requiring additional support. Scholars will be assessed using formative and summative assessments aligned with state standards. Key metrics such as benchmark tests and classroom performance will help identify academic struggles. Behavior tracking systems and observations will identify patterns such as chronic absenteeism, disciplinary referrals, or social-emotional concerns. The MTSS-Academics and Behavior framework will serve as the cornerstone for identifying and addressing the needs of at-risk scholars. This includes regular data review meetings involving teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Teachers and families will have opportunities to voice concerns and share insights about scholars, complementing data-driven identification processes.

Programs, Strategies, and Supports for Success. Novus SMART Academy will employ a variety of research-based strategies to ensure at-risk scholars succeed. Scholars will engage in differentiated instruction tailored to their reading and comprehension levels, and targeted math interventions will focus on foundational skills and problem-solving strategies. We will provide high-quality instruction and classroom-level supports for all scholars in Tier I; small-group interventions targeting specific academic or behavioral needs for scholars in Tier II; and intensive, individualized interventions with regular progress monitoring for scholars in Tier III. To promote and support Character Education, all scholars will participate in weekly lessons fostering social-emotional learning, resilience, and problem-solving skills.

Staffing to Support At-Risk Scholars. The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement will collaborate to oversee curriculum implementation and data analysis. They will work together to ensure our Character Education program provides access to research-based strategies and resources to support their academic and/or challenging behaviors. The MTSS Coordinators will manage interventions and monitor progress for at-risk scholars. We will also leverage Project Play Therapy, our contracted service provider, to deliver specialized services, such as speech therapy or counseling.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Methods for identifying at-risk scholars through academic and behavioral processes. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will employ methods for identifying at-risk scholars through academic and behavioral processes. Our constant analysis of data will make sure we promptly identify any scholars who are at-risk for academic failure or display challenging behaviors. In Year 5, our leadership staffing model will include an Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, an Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, a K-2 Assistant Principal, a 3-5 Assistant Principal, and Contract Services Providers. We will hire staff with the capacity to meet the needs of scholars facing high rates of poverty and at risk of failure. We will follow all guidelines to accelerate scholar growth through targeted intervention support as outlined in Figure 38 below.

Figure 38 - Targeted Intervention Support for At-Risk Scholars

Requirements	MTSS-Academics	MTSS-Behavior
Diagnostic Data	NWEA MAP - Given in Fall, Winter, Spring FastBridge Universal Screening School Psychologist Screening (as contracted through Project Play Therapy)	PowerSchool Data FastBridge Universal Screening School Psychologist Screening (as contracted through Project Play Therapy)
Benchmark Tool	FastBridge (only T2 and T3 scholars)	FastBridge Scholar Reflection and Climate Surveys
Program Monitoring Tool	FastBridge (only T2 and T3 scholars)	FastBridge Scholar Reflection and Climate Surveys
Data Meetings	Weekly on Wednesdays	Weekly on Wednesdays
File Folders	MTSS-Academics Coordinator who is also the Data and Assessments Coordinator at Full Scale	Managed by School Counselor as the MTSS-Behavior-Coordinator
RTI2 Coordinator	Assistant Principal of Scholar Access serving as the MTSS-Academics Coordinator	School Counselor and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement serving as the MTSS-Behavior Coordinators
RTI2 Team Chairperson	TBD	TBD
Fidelity Checks	MTSS-Academics Coordinator (biweekly for Tier II; weekly for Tier III)	MTSS-Behavior-Coordinator (biweekly for Tier II; weekly for Tier III)
Creation of Intervention Plans	Intervention plans created by the MTSS-Academics Coordinator during data meetings based on NWEA MAP and FastBridge data points.	Intervention plans created by the MTSS-Behavior-Coordinator during data meetings based on PowerSchool and FastBridge data points.
Ineffective Intervention Plan (step 1)	Collect minimum progress monitoring data points, adjust intervention plans during data meetings.	Collect minimum progress monitoring data points, adjust intervention plans during data meetings.
Ineffective Intervention Plan (step 2)	If data continue to show that adjusted intervention plans are still ineffective, make a referral to the MTSS-Academics Support Team during data meetings. Home Visits	If data continue to show that adjusted intervention plans are still ineffective, make a referral to the MTSS-Behavior Support Team during data meetings. Home Visits

Monitoring and Addressing Progress. To ensure continuous support, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement a robust monitoring system for academic progress and behavioral needs. Key components include: Scholars' performance in literacy and math will be closely tracked through bi-weekly and monthly assessments. Behavioral progress will be

monitored using tools like behavior rating scales and self-regulation checklists. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will address the learning needs of at-risk scholars and monitor their progress through high-quality academic instruction and character education that allows for the delivery of a literacy-focused curriculum driven assessment data and collaborative problem-solving (CPS). When scholars struggle, we will introduce a Tier I intervention immediately. All Novus SMART Academy (K-8) scholars will participate in our MTSS-Academics and Behavior so we can monitor their progress and ensure every scholar is growing over time. Scholars who are at risk of academic or behavioral failure will participate in Tier I, II, or III interventions based on their individual needs. The table below details a timeline for targeted scholars in Kindergarten (Year 1) literacy and math outcomes of our RTI2-Academics program.

Section 1.8i: Describe the plan and procedures to identify intellectually gifted students. Detail the use of research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities to meet these students' academic needs. Explain how the school will monitor and evaluate the progress and success of intellectually gifted students.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to ensuring that all scholars, including those identified as intellectually gifted, receive a high-quality academic experience tailored to their unique strengths. Scholars identified as intellectually gifted exhibit intellectual abilities, creativity, and potential for achievement that exceed academic expectations to the degree that differentiated general education programming is essential. Below, we outline our procedures for identifying, supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the progress of these scholars, aligned with the requirements of the Tennessee Department of Education and research-based practices.

Identification Procedures. The identification process for intellectually gifted scholars will be facilitated by our Gifted Education Teacher with support from the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, and with support from the Proposed Executive Director as needed. To ensure accuracy, we will utilize nationally normed assessments such as the NWEA MAP assessment to identify scholars performing at or above the 90th percentile. In cases where the scholar population does not include individuals at the 90th percentile, we will use relative norms to identify scholars performing at or above the 85th percentile. We will also solicit teacher, parent/guardian, and self-referrals for scholars demonstrating advanced intellectual or creative abilities. We will employ the following evaluation procedures in Figure 39:

Figure 39 - Gifted Scholars Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation Procedures	Description of Procedure
Implement Procedure	Establish and implement Child Find procedures for identifying scholars.
Background Considerations	MTSS-Academics team identifies potential intellectually gifted scholars through RTI2 Universal Screener data; NWEA MAP performance; local norms taken into consideration considering national norms; language acquisition skills (except with EL scholars); Vision/Hearing issues; Past performance (exemplary performance on previous assessments); Cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity considerations where scholars are underrepresented.
Screening	Child Find procedures, review of multiple data sources (TNReady scores, MTSS screening data, teacher checklists of characteristics of gifted scholars and norm-referenced assessments) to support evidence of a need for further individual screening or comprehensive evaluation; MTSS teams determine if individual screening is needed.
Assessment through Multi-modal Identification Process	Individual evaluation of cognition, educational performance, and creativity/characteristics of giftedness.
Documentation	• Documentation to capture academic information, characteristics of giftedness/creativity, social-emotional/pre-vocational skills, environmental considerations. • Multiple sources of data collected (NWEA, TNReady, teacher observation checklists, TN Parent Information Form, general education documentation of classroom intervention forms).
Referral, Evaluation, and Program	• Pre-referral background considerations met. • Parent request for referral and evaluation. • Completion of the TN Assessment Team Instrument Selection Form. • Determination of whether evaluation is needed. • If yes, the team designs a program to meet the needs of scholars.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Comprehensive Evaluation. Our multidisciplinary evaluation team will include the parent or guardian, referring General Education Teacher, Gifted Education Teacher, and school psychologist (as contracted through Project Play Therapy). The Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and Gifted Education Teacher will provide professional learning and development on how to identify the characteristics of gifted children in an effort to make a referral. The evaluation process will include multiple measures, such as cognitive ability tests, academic achievement data, and behavioral checklists. During the identification process, we will engage with Project Play Therapy and its school psychologist for professional evaluation and support.

Monitoring and Evaluating Progress. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will monitor and evaluate the progress and success of intellectually gifted scholars as follows in Figure 40:

Figure 40 - Monitoring and Evaluating Progress.

Action	Outcomes
Regular Data Analysis	• Weekly data team meetings and quarterly Data Days to review scholars' performance on assessments, including NWEA MAP results and classroom-based formative assessments. • Track growth trajectories of scholars identified as gifted, focusing on their academic progress and engagement.
Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)	• Develop and implement IEPs that specify measurable academic and developmental goals, aligned to the scholar's strengths and needs. • Regularly review and update IEPs with input from teachers, parents, and specialists.
Ongoing Feedback	Gather qualitative feedback from teachers, parents, and scholars on the effectiveness of instructional strategies and enrichment opportunities.
Annual Reviews	Conduct comprehensive annual evaluations of gifted programming effectiveness, including scholar achievement data, teacher feedback, and parental input.

Research-Based Instructional Programs and Strategies. To meet the needs of intellectually gifted scholars, Novus SMART Academy will provide a range of research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities designed to enhance their abilities. These offerings will be adequately challenging and include tasks such as, but not limited to differentiated tasks, enrichment, compacting, acceleration, grouping, independent study, supplemental learning materials, cluster grouping, multi-age grouping, extended learning projects, and assignments intentionally aligned to meet the needs outlined in their IEP. We will also encourage intellectually gifted scholars to take the ACT in Grade 7 to demonstrate their college readiness early and aid in qualifying them for enrichment programs, such as offerings in Figure 41.

Figure 41 - Gifted Scholars Evaluation Procedures

Enrichment Program Offering	Description
Enrichment Opportunities, Specialized Assignments, and Early College Readiness	• Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL): Scholars will engage in complex, real-world problems and projects to develop higher-order thinking skills. • Differentiated instruction: Tailored lessons and tasks that challenge gifted scholars at their advanced levels. • Extended learning projects and assignments aligned with individualized goals outlined in scholars' IEPs. • Encourage Grade 7 scholars to take the ACT to assess college readiness and qualify for external enrichment programs.
Advanced Coursework	• Opportunities for curriculum compacting, acceleration, and independent study. • Supplemental learning materials, including access to advanced texts and technology-enabled learning tools.
Flexible Grouping	• Cluster grouping with peers of similar abilities.

Section 1.8 - Special Populations (Required for All Sponsors)	
	• Multi-age grouping to provide additional challenges and collaboration opportunities.
Weekend and Afterschool Enrichment through Community Partners	We will partner and collaborate with organizations in Rutherford County, Tennessee such as the Boys and Girls Club and other organizations throughout the county.
Duke Talent Identification Program	For scholars in Grades 4-8, offering interactive learning environments specifically designed for gifted scholars in person or virtually.
Science Olympiad	For scholars interested in working on extended learning projects to compete in the Science Olympiad. Teams of scholars develop teamwork and problem-solving throughout the year in preparation for each of the events. Middle school teams initially compete in a one-day regional tournament that is held at several locations throughout Tennessee. The top 24 teams from each division advance to the state tournament held at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in the spring. The winning team in each division then competes in the National Tournament generally scheduled in late May.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement. As Novus SMART Academy (K-8) grows overtime, we will transition from utilizing contracted gifted education services to hiring a full-time gifted teacher. This progression reflects our commitment to expanding resources and expertise to meet the needs of all intellectually gifted scholars. Additionally, Novus SMART Academy will remain current on emerging research and best practices in gifted education, ensuring that our scholars are equipped to excel academically and personally.

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Section 1.9 - Conversion Charter School Planning
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 12)

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.1a: Describe the composition and size of the governing board and board committees. Explain how the proposed governance structure and composition will ensure there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders and will ensure the proposed school will be an educational and operational success.

The proposed governance structure and Board composition for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reflects a well-aligned and comprehensive approach to overseeing educational, operational, and financial performance. Here are the key aspects that reinforce effective governance and stakeholder representation:

Board Composition. With a Board size of 15 members with four Board Officer roles (Board Chair, Board Vice Chair, Board Treasurer, and Board Secretary), the Board structure ensures quality oversight. The inclusion of these roles allows for clear delegation of responsibilities in leadership, finance, and record-keeping, crucial for maintaining accountability.

- **Proposed Executive Director's Role.** The Proposed Executive Director's position as a non-voting, ex officio member supports collaboration without conflict of interest, keeping Board governance and daily school-based management separate. This allows the Board to hold the Proposed Executive Director accountable while benefiting from their expertise.
- **Active and Effective Representation.** While it is accurate that this is the first charter school initiated by our Proposed Executive Director and the proposed Board of Directors as a collective, we have intentionally structured our governance and leadership to mitigate gaps to ensure a strong foundation for success. Our proposed Board of Directors currently consists of 15 dedicated members, each selected for their expertise in key areas critical to the success of a high-performing charter school. The board is organized into four standing committees: Academics, Finance, Development, and Governance. This committee structure ensures focused oversight and shared responsibility in all essential domains of school planning, launch, and long-term operation. Most importantly, two members of our founding team bring direct, extensive experience in founding and leading start-up charter schools.
    - **Patricia Pryor.** Patricia Pryor is a passionate and accomplished educator with a strong track record of founding and shaping high-performing schools. She has consistently led with vision, purpose, and results throughout her career. Patricia began her journey in school leadership as a Founding ELA Teacher and Reading Coordinator at KIPP Nashville in Antioch, Tennessee, where she played a critical role in establishing the academic foundation of the school. From July 2019 to May 2021, she designed and delivered rigorous, data-informed literacy instruction tailored to the diverse needs of her students. In addition to directly serving 66 scholars, she led the development of reading programs impacting over 300 students school-wide. Her leadership extended beyond the classroom as she served as Grade Level Chair for the 5th grade team, fostering collaboration, consistency, and excellence in instructional practice. In May 2021, Patricia advanced to the role of Founding Dean of Culture and Instructional Coach, further expanding her impact on students, teachers, and school-wide systems. In this leadership position, she guided 36 staff members through comprehensive professional development in areas such as classroom culture and restorative discipline. She also implemented a school-wide discipline system that emphasized positive behavior supports and meaningful student engagement. As an instructional coach, Patricia worked closely with teachers, providing weekly coaching to strengthen classroom culture, management, and instructional effectiveness. She led data-driven conversations following benchmark assessments and monitored overall academic progress to ensure all students were on a path to success. She also organized extracurricular initiatives that supported students' social-emotional development and enriched the school community. Patricia Pryor's experience as a founding teacher and founding school **leader** underscores her ability to build strong academic and cultural systems from the ground up. Her proven ability to lead in both instruction and culture makes her a cornerstone of the founding team at Novus SMART Academy (K-8**)**. Her expertise is critical to establishing the systems, structures, and supports that will define the school's early success and long-term sustainability. As Novus SMART Academy (K-8) prepares to launch, Patricia's insight, leadership, and deep understanding of what it takes to open a high-quality school are invaluable to its mission of producing global achievers and laying a strong academic foundation from day one.
    - **Jeremy Sager.** Dr. Jeremy Sager, our Proposed Executive Director, **i**s an accomplished educational leader whose career is anchored in a steadfast commitment to student and teacher success. A firm believer in servant leadership, Dr. Sager empowers teachers, school leaders, and staff to reach their highest potential, knowing that adult growth is essential for driving transformative student outcomes. His leadership creates environments where educators thrive and students excel. Dr. Sager brings a proven track record of developing high-performance systems that strengthen instructional leadership, foster a culture of high expectations, and promote data-informed decision-making. With a focus on urgency and intentionality, he implements initiatives that improve academic results while ensuring robust accountability structures that sustain long-term excellence. As a former middle school principal, Dr. Sager provided both instructional and cultural leadership that directly contributed to measurable gains in student achievement. Under his guidance, the school earned recognition as a TVAAS Level 5 Reward School, a testament to significant academic growth. He led weekly professional development, crafted individualized teacher growth plans, and aligned the school's instructional priorities with a clear, shared vision of excellence. Dr.

Sager also brings deep experience in school operations, working closely with operations teams to ensure that school facilities are safe, well-maintained, and conducive to learning. He collaborates to streamline systems that deliver essential student services, such as transportation, nutrition, and health support, efficiently and effectively, so that all operational aspects of the school reinforce strong academic outcomes. In recognition of his impact, Dr. Sager was honored in 2022 by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools as a Public Charter School Changemaker. This national acknowledgment reflects his years of success as an educational leader, where he has consistently demonstrated an ability to improve student achievement and long-term success. With a leadership style grounded in competence, consistency, and a growth mindset, Dr. Sager is a collaborative and results-driven professional who brings unwavering focus, steady guidance, and a deep commitment to continuous improvement in service of students.

- **Erica Roberts.** Erica Roberts brings over a decade of transformative educational leadership and classroom experience to the founding team of Novus SMART Academy (K-8**)**. With a proven track record of raising student achievement, cultivating high-performing educators, and building school-wide systems for academic success, Erica is uniquely positioned to help our school fulfill its mission of producing global achievers through rigorous academics, character development, and relentless ambition. Part of Erica's career was serving as a founding elementary school Teacher in Orlando, Florida (2015–2019), where she taught Grades K and 2-5. Beyond the classroom, she served as grade chair, instructional lead, technology coordinator, and mentor teacher, helping shape the academic and behavioral culture of the school from its inception. Her leadership directly contributed to the school's transformation from a state-assigned D to a B rating**,** with 95% of her students achieving proficiency (Level 3 or higher) and 80% demonstrating measurable academic growth. Notably, students in her STEAM-integrated instructional program consistently earned Level 4 or 5 on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA). Erica also launched and led the Eco Club, coordinating grants, community partnerships, and budget planning to deepen students' environmental literacy and civic responsibility. Erica also served as the Founding Assistant Principal of Instruction (K–2) at IDEA Victory in Tampa (2021–2024)**,** where she expanded her leadership capacity in a high-stakes, high-growth environment. Over three years, she played a central role in launching and scaling a successful elementary program—managing instructional coaches, ESE and testing programs, regional professional development, and teacher onboarding. She demonstrated exceptional leadership in academic strategy, operational systems, and teacher development. Her results speak volumes:
  - 93% of teachers rated Level 4 or 5 in instruction and data.
  - 92% of K–2 scholars on track for grade-level reading mastery.
  - 97.6% teacher retention, the highest in the region.
  - 94–100% positive ratings from teachers in credibility, communication, development, and school culture via TNTP surveys.
  - Massive gains in student proficiency, such as a 39-point ELA increase (12% to 51%) from PM1 to PM3 in 2023 state assessments.

  Erica also designed and facilitated critical systems including academic pacing guides, school-wide testing plans, family engagement strategies, attendance interventions, instructional coaching cycles**,** and master scheduling—making her an asset to school startup planning and operations.

- **Strategic Appointment Process.** The appointment of the Board Chair and Treasurer, in collaboration with the BES Senior Director and Governance Coach, and the selection of the Vice Chair and Secretary with input from the Board Chair, sets a strong foundation. This ensures that leadership aligns with the school's mission and vision while leveraging external expertise for leadership development.
- **Board Committees for Specialized Oversight.** The creation of four key committees- Academics, Development, Finance, and Governance- supports targeted focus areas as follows:
  - Academics Committee: By defining academic goals and tracking enrollment, demographics, and outcomes, this committee will help ensure that the Board can meet charter promises.
  - Development Committee: This group aligns fundraising efforts with strategic goals, integrating Board members and volunteers into resource development.
  - Finance Committee: By overseeing budget creation, implementation, and asset management policies, this committee ensures sound financial practices.
  - Governance Committee: Responsible for Board development, it will maintain a continuous improvement process to enhance the Board's strategic value.

Rigorous Selection Process for Founding Team Members. The Proposed Executive Director structured approach in vetting Founding Team members is thorough, involving a multi-step evaluation process to align skills and capacity with the mission and operational goals of Novus SMART Academy. This approach establishes clear expectations for Board contributions and strengthens the team's cohesion and efficiency.

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

Commitment to Training and Development. Ongoing support from BoardOnTrack and BES Follow-on Support, including professional learning on best practices and governance, further strengthens the Board's capacity. This emphasis on training ensures that Board members remain effective in their oversight and governance roles.

Separation of Governance and Management. The Board's commitment to focusing on governance while holding the Proposed Executive Director accountable for daily operations demonstrates an understanding of proper role distinctions, which is essential for long-term sustainability.

Section 2.1b: Explain how the board will evaluate the success of the school, the school leader, and its own performance.

Regular Monitoring through Key Performance Indicators. By reviewing key performance indicators in academics, development, finance, and governance at every meeting, the Board will maintain a proactive approach to identifying and addressing challenges in real time.

Success of the School. The Board will evaluate Novus SMART Academy's success by analyzing data across academics, school culture, and operations. There will be an annual comprehensive evaluation conducted at the end of each academic year. This evaluation will provide a detailed analysis of academic performance, school culture, operational effectiveness, and adherence to the charter agreement. The elevation will also incorporate feedback from stakeholders, including scholars, families, and staff to guide strategic planning for the following school year. There will also be quarterly benchmark reviews to monitor progress toward annual goals, including academic results, family engagement metrics, fiscal performance, and compliance with operational standards. Monthly monitoring will consist of brief updates provided during monthly board meetings to address immediate concerns and to review key performance indicators aligned to our annual goals.

The Academics Committee will provide insights into academic benchmarks and high-quality instruction. This component of the evaluation will ensure that all school-based assessments align with best practices in student achievement and the Tennessee Academic Standards across all subjects. We will analyze assessment data to identify trends and recommend targeted interventions for the Proposed Executive Director to implement at the school level. This Committee will also assess family engagement initiatives and school culture by analyzing survey results, attendance data, and community feedback to ensure the school fosters a supportive and positive school environment.

The Finance Committee will review operational data, including fiscal health, budget adherence, and staff retention rates in partnership with our contracted services providers (i.e., auditor and EdTec). We will ensure transparency and the effective allocation of resources to support academic and operational goals.

Through legal advisory, the Governance Committee will verify compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, and monitor adherence to the charter agreement, ensuring evaluations meet regulatory standards. Evaluation findings will be compiled into reports and shared with the Board of Directors and other stakeholders. Annual reports will highlight achievements, challenges, and recommendations for continuous improvement. Quarterly updates will guide mid-year adjustments to maintain alignment with the school's mission and goals. Legal compliance and fiscal health updates will ensure accountability to the Tennessee Department of Education and other regulatory bodies.

School Leader Evaluation. An ad hoc Evaluation Committee, consisting of the Board Chair, Board Treasurer, and a representative from the Academics Committee, will conduct an annual review of the Proposed Executive Director. The Evaluation Committee will integrate BoardOnTrack's evidence-based evaluation tool with the TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric to assess the Proposed Executive Director's effectiveness using the following key performance indicators: Instructional Leadership for Continuous Improvement, Culture for Teaching and Learning, Professional Learning and Growth, and Resource Management. This evaluation will also include the collection and analysis of academic performance goals, a self-evaluation, and school culture survey results from scholars, families and staff members. The ad hoc Evaluation Committee will use the evaluation tool to produce a succinct summary of the results to share with the Proposed Executive Director that will strengthen our partnership by ensuring a consistent, high-quality evaluation process every year. Board members with educational and leadership backgrounds will lend their expertise in assessing academic and relational competencies, while finance and management experts will evaluate the Proposed Executive Director's operational and fiscal leadership. This multifaceted evaluation supports the Proposed Executive Director in achieving Novus SMART Academy's goals and upholding accountability to both the Board and community.

Board Evaluation. The proposed Board of Directors for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is composed of individuals with extensive expertise across critical areas—including education, finance, legal matters, and community engagement—ensuring robust oversight and guidance for the school. This diversity in Board member backgrounds supports well-rounded evaluations and decision-making essential to meeting the school's goals and commitments.

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

The Governance Committee will also use BoardOnTrack to survey all board members and the Proposed Executive Director to assess the Board's overall capacity. This tool will cover all aspects of performance management and allow for a nuanced understanding of both achievements and areas requiring attention. BoardOnTrack has 11 assessments that will be assigned to Board members most relevant for our current needs. The Governance Committee will analyze the data to understand strengths and areas of growth. The Governance Committee Chair will process the results internally and debrief with our BES Follow-on Support Governance Coach to leverage personalized recommendations for the report and assign self-paced professional development to Board Members. By drawing on the collective expertise of the Board, this approach ensures that evaluations are accurate, actionable, and aligned with the school's mission and values.

The Governance Committee will lead the Board's own annual self-assessment using the BoardOnTrack evidence-based evaluation tools, involving formal surveys and feedback to identify areas of strength and improvement. The Governance Committee will facilitate the processes to create and track goals by committee and/or task force. This will help the Governance Committee to create tasks, assign owners and deadlines, and monitor progress over time. Board members with governance and strategic planning experience will play an essential role in designing this process to support continuous improvement, helping the Board remain effective in overseeing the school's success. Through this self-evaluation, the Board remains adaptive and accountable, consistently striving to enhance its contribution to the school's mission.

Oversight and Accountability Framework. The Board of Directors' commitment to annual reviews—covering the Proposed Executive Director's performance, Board policies, bylaws, and organizational strengths and weaknesses—underscores their dedication to a high standard of governance. The Board's diverse expertise ensures comprehensive oversight, empowering them to safeguard the success of Novus SMART Academy.

Section 2.1c: Describe how the board will develop over time. Explain plans for recruiting board members with identified skills and addressing board member attrition.

The plan for Board member recruitment, attrition management, and governance at Novus SMART Academy focuses on establishing a high-performing Board with strong alignment to the mission and long-term sustainability. This approach emphasizes rigorous recruitment, support, and development to meet the school's needs.

Board Member Recruitment and Selection. With a founding team rich in expertise across community outreach, business law, public relations, education, finance, marketing, and fundraising, we will actively seek to broaden this skill base as we recruit future Board members. This includes identifying and filling roles with skills critical to our growth, such as operations, technology, academic programming, and policy advocacy.

- Gap Analysis and Annual Review: The Governance Committee will conduct an annual (or as-needed) gap analysis to identify skill shortages or emerging needs based on evolving strategic goals. This analysis helps ensure a proactive approach to recruitment, aligning Board composition with Novus SMART Academy's mission and growth trajectory.
- Finance-Focused Recruitment: To strengthen fiscal oversight, we will have at least two members with finance backgrounds to bolster the Finance Committee's capacity, enhancing fiscal integrity and sustainability. Currently, a founding member with a finance background serves as Board Treasurer, and adding an additional expert will give us the opportunity to safeguard fiscal governance as the school.
- Community and Network Partnerships: Through partnerships with organizations like EdTec (for back-office support) and networking through local groups such as the Leadership Rutherford cohort, we will access community expertise, gain resources, and expand our recruitment pool to include highly qualified candidates committed to educational excellence. Connections with Tennessee Charter School Networks (e.g., Gestalt Community Schools, LEAD Public Schools, Tennessee Charter School Center) will provide additional insights into best practices for governance and operational effectiveness, informing our recruitment and development efforts.
- Commitment and Alignment to Mission and Vision: Prospective Board members must share an unwavering belief in Novus SMART Academy's core values, which include a commitment to, and a belief in, every child's potential. They must also demonstrate professional expertise, readiness to serve on relevant committees, and dedication to contributing their networks, time, and resources.
- OnBoarding Process: New members will receive an in-depth orientation led by the Board Chair and Governance Committee, covering the mission, vision, community needs, Board governance vs. management roles, academic model, and Board committee structures. Orientation ensures members are fully prepared to contribute effectively from day one.
- Nominating and Election Process: The Governance Committee will formally nominate Board candidates, who will then be approved by a two-thirds vote of the seated Directors. Board members will serve three-year terms, with staggered rotations to balance continuity and new perspectives. Term limits (maximum of three consecutive terms) support fresh input and prevent stagnation.

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

Addressing Attrition and Ensuring Board Continuity. To mitigate unexpected vacancies, the Governance Committee will maintain an active roster of prospective Board candidates identified through ongoing recruitment and networking efforts. This pool of qualified individuals will ensure continuity in Board function, even in cases of unforeseen turnover.

- Staggered Terms and Succession Planning: Board members will serve staggered terms to maintain institutional knowledge and stability. Additionally, the Board will establish succession plans for key positions, such as Board Chair and committee leads, to facilitate seamless leadership transitions.
- BoardOnTrack and BES Follow-on Support: With BoardOnTrack's platform and BES Follow-on Support, the Board will receive continuous professional learning and governance training. BoardOnTrack will help streamline documentation, provide performance-tracking tools, and conduct annual Board self-assessments to ensure high governance standards and Board member accountability.
- Role-Specific Training: Members, especially those taking on new roles, will undergo role-specific training (e.g., for treasurers or committee chairs) to deepen their knowledge and ensure effective decision-making. For fiscal governance, EdTec will provide training on budgeting, compliance, and policy to support the Finance Committee's leadership.

Annual Self-Assessment and Development Plan. Annually, the Governance Committee will facilitate a Board self-assessment using tools from BoardOnTrack to evaluate areas for improvement and provide a tailored development plan. This process not only identifies areas of growth but also reinforces accountability by setting measurable goals.

Cultivating Leadership and Ensuring Board Effectiveness. Through BoardOnTrack and BES Follow-on Support resources, Board members will be prepared to step into leadership roles as necessary. This includes training on strategic governance, financial oversight, and effective Board management practices.

Evaluation Frameworks and Continuous Feedback. To support continuous professional development, BoardOnTrack provides structured annual self-assessment tools for individual members and the Board as a whole. These assessments evaluate performance across key areas, identify skill gaps, and create opportunities for targeted training. These assessments will be instrumental in helping our Board conduct meaningful reviews and establish action plans for improvement, guided by insights from BoardOnTrack's governance experts.

Parent Representation. As required by T.C.A. § 49-13-109, the Board will appoint a parent representative within six months of Novus SMART Academy's opening. This position will ensure that family perspectives and needs are consistently represented in Board decisions, strengthening our connection to the community we serve.

Commitment to Mission-Aligned Engagement. Each Board member's role will be structured around active committee participation, reinforcing a hands-on governance approach. This expectation of committee service and mission-driven engagement will foster a culture of accountability and dedication, essential for a high-functioning Board. Through these detailed plans for recruitment, development, and leadership cultivation, Novus SMART Academy's Board of Directors will remain a diverse, capable, and mission-aligned body dedicated to the school's success. These measures ensure that the Board not only complies with regulatory standards but also excels in guiding Novus SMART Academy toward achieving its mission of empowering scholars through education.

Section 2.1d: Describe the training or orientation new board members will receive. Detail the ongoing development will existing board members receive. Note that T.C.A. § 49-13-111(o) requires all annual board training to be approved by the State Board of Education; documentation of this training must be provided to the authorizer.

To ensure a strong foundation for effective governance and accountability, Novus SMART Academy will leverage BES Follow-on Support (in Years 0-2) and BoardOnTrack (beginning in Years 0 and beyond) to provide governance support that will strengthen our capacity as we develop over time. Both organizations specialize in providing tailored resources that support and strengthen charter school Boards. These partnerships will begin with comprehensive training and orientation programs for Board members, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to excel in their assigned Board roles.

Initial Orientation for New Members. We will leverage BoardOnTrack's expert-led modules to familiarize new members with core governance concepts, including fiduciary responsibilities, compliance requirements, and best practices for charter school Boards. New Board members will also have access to a robust library of training materials that address essential topics, enabling self-paced learning tailored to individual schedules. During orientation, new Board members will learn to navigate BoardOnTrack's centralized hub for accessing agendas, meeting minutes, policies, and other critical Board materials. Orientation will also include guidance on meeting the annual training requirements mandated by T.C.A. § 49-13-111(o), ensuring that new members are fully informed of their legal obligations. Per T.C.A. § 49-13-111(o), the Board will receive an annual training that is certified by the Tennessee Charter School Center and submitted to the authorizer. The Board will reflect best practices by ensuring its members receive training on topics to include open meeting law adherence, academic and financial oversight, legal compliance, and overall governance responsibilities.

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

Ongoing Training for All Board Members. To maintain high standards of governance and ensure continuous improvement, all Board members will participate in ongoing training and development through BES Follow-on Support (in years 0-2) to include coaching calls, video feedback, document review, site visits, access to a resource hub, and cohort-based professional development webinars. In Years 0 and beyond, BoardOnTrack will provide a structured framework to support ongoing professional growth using an online hub to serve as the repository for all Board materials, ensuring that members can access agendas, policies, and meeting minutes always. Automated reminders for meetings, task deadlines, and assignments will streamline operations and enhance transparency, reducing administrative workload. BES Coaches and BoardOnTrack's governance experts will be available for monthly and as-needed consulting sessions, offering insights on pressing issues like strategic decision-making and conflict resolution, and will create a robust framework for professional learning and development.

BoardOnTrack will also provide a combination of live training sessions and on-demand modules covering governance essentials, leadership best practices, and compliance topics. Training topics will be tailored to align with the Board's strategic priorities, including enrollment goals, financial management, and academic oversight. The Board will utilize BoardOnTrack's tools to establish specific, measurable objectives and monitor progress toward these goals, including tracking academic goals and enrollment targets, school culture and operations, and financial milestones. Structured evaluations will help identify performance gaps and create targeted action plans for improvement. These assessments will inform future training needs and guide strategic planning efforts. Analytics will provide actionable feedback to help the Board refine its practices and enhance its collective impact. BoardOnTrack's tools will assist the Governance Committee in identifying areas of need, such as finance, fundraising, or marketing, and recruiting high-capacity individuals to fill these roles. The platform provides resources to prepare future Board leaders, ensuring continuity and stability in governance over time. By leveraging the comprehensive tools and expertise provided by BES Follow-on Support and BoardOnTrack, we will cultivate a high-performing Board capable of driving the school's mission forward and achieving its ambitious goals.

Section 2.1e: Describe the circumstances under which complaints will be brought to the board, and the process for addressing them.

The complaint resolution process at Novus SMART Academy ensures transparency, fairness, and accountability in handling issues brought forward by families and/or staff. Our structured approach clarifies responsibilities and prioritizes resolving concerns effectively and impartially.

School-Level Resolution. At the initial level, the Proposed Executive Director is the designated point of contact for managing complaints within the school. The Proposed Executive Director works directly with families to address and resolve concerns promptly. However, families also have the right to escalate complaints directly to the Board of Directors if they feel their concerns have not been adequately addressed at the school level.

Board-Level Involvement. For cases that cannot be resolved within the school, our formal escalation process involves the Board Chair and the Board of Directors, who will manage the complaint in accordance with legal requirements and our established policies. Typically, complaints will be redirected to the Proposed Executive Director for resolution, with some exceptions. If the complaint involves legal, ethical, or safety issues, the Board will take immediate responsibility for managing the matter.

Formal Complaint Procedures. Our formal complaint procedures, documented in the Scholar-Family Handbook, outline step-by-step guidance for filing a complaint. This handbook, provided to all families free of charge during our summer orientations, is updated annually to reflect any policy changes. Families can find detailed information on our Filing a Complaint Procedures in Attachments E and F. To ensure a clear, effective process, here's an expanded version with any missing steps added, providing additional detail for transparency and smooth handling of complaints:

Step 1: Initial Complaint Submission to the Proposed Executive Director

- **Filing the Complaint.** Families begin by submitting a written complaint to the Proposed Executive Director , detailing the nature of the concern and any relevant facts.
- **Confirmation of Receipt.** Upon receiving the complaint, the Proposed Executive Director promptly confirms receipt in writing within 24 hours and informs families of the next steps.

Step 2: Appointment and Initial Meeting with School Leadership

- **Scheduling the Appointment.** Within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, the Proposed Executive Director schedules an appointment with the family.
- **Initial Meeting.** The Proposed Executive Director meets with the family at the scheduled time to listen to their concerns.
- **Review of Evidence.** During the meeting, the Proposed Executive Director presents any evidence-based data relevant to the complaint, such as academic records, communication logs, or behavior reports, to provide transparency around the situation.

Section 2.1 – Governance
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Discussion and Negotiation.** There is an opportunity to discuss potential resolutions. However, the school will resolve the complaint based on the preponderance of concrete evidence and truth.

Step 3: Escalation to the Board of Directors if Unresolved

- **Option to Appeal.** If the family is unsatisfied with the outcome, they may file a written appeal to the Board of Directors within ten days of the initial decision from the Proposed Executive Director.
- **Confirmation of Appeal Receipt.** The Board Chair acknowledges receipt of the appeal in writing within 24 hours, along with an overview of the Board's process.

Step 4: Scheduling and Holding the Board Meeting

- **Scheduling a Board Meeting.** The Board Chair schedules a meeting with the family within 48 hours of receiving the appeal. The meeting date, time, and location are confirmed with all involved parties, including the Proposed Executive Director.
- **Board Hearing.** During this hearing, the Board Chair and other Board members meet with the family, and the Proposed Executive Director to review the complaint. This is an opportunity for the family to share any new information or clarify their concerns.
- **Evidence Presentation and Questioning.** The Board reviews evidence-based data from both the family and the Proposed Executive Director . Board members can ask clarifying questions to ensure all perspectives are heard, with both the family and the Proposed Executive Director allowed to respond.

Step 5: Board Deliberation and Decision

- **Board Deliberation.** After hearing from all parties, the Board deliberates in private to reach a decision based on the preponderance of evidence. The deliberation considers all information presented, with the Board prioritizing a fair, evidence-driven outcome.
- **Notification of Decision.** Within 24 hours of the Board's decision, the Board Chair notifies the family in writing about the final decision and outlines how the complaint will be mitigated.

Step 6: Documentation and Follow-Up

- **Documentation.** All complaint records, including meeting notes, evidence reviewed, and final decisions, are documented and securely stored in the scholar's school records.
- **Follow-Up.** The Proposed Executive Director follows up with the family within 10 days to ensure satisfaction with the implementation of the resolution and provide any necessary support.

Addressing Discrimination and Harassment. For concerns related to discrimination based on disability, identification, evaluation, or educational placement, Novus SMART Academy follows guidance from the Tennessee Department of Education's Students' Rights Brochure. We will ensure accessibility to this brochure for families, scholars, and staff through the front office. Scholars, families, or staff members who believe they have experienced discrimination or harassment can file a complaint directly with the Proposed Executive Director, or, if it involves the Proposed Executive Director, with the Board of Directors.

Section 2.1f: List all current and identified board members and their areas of focus or expertise in Table 4: Board Members. Add rows as needed.

Section 2.1g: Provide the following documents as attachments:

See Attachment G: Click Here and Click Here
See Attachment H: Click Here
See Attachment I: Click Here
See Attachment J: Click Here
See Attachment K: Click Here
See Attachment L: Click Here
See Attachment M: Click Here

Table 4: Board Members
(Required for All Sponsors)

Name	Address	Current Role	Area of Focus / Expertise	Board Position	Proposed Total Term Length
		Job and Employer	Ex: Legal, Real Estate, Finance, etc.	Ex: board chair, other officer, parent representative, ex officio member	
Charles Frazier	5358 Murfreesboro Road, La Vergne, Tennessee 37086	Law Offices of Charles R. Frazier, Managing Attorney	Legal Expertise & Attorney	Board Chair & Governance Committee Chair	3 years
LaTarsha White	1652 Carson Meadows Lane, Nolensville, Tennessee 37135	KIPP Nashville Public Schools, Assistant Principal	Education	Board Vice Chair & Academics Committee Chair	3 years
Daniel Kadeba	5521 Dory Drive, Antioch, Tennessee 37013	Embla Medical, Director of Finance and Strategy	Finance	Board Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair	3 years
Celest Davis	431 Dellwood Drive, Smyrna, Tennessee 37167	DaVita Healthcare, Credentialing Specialist	Community Service Outreach & Fundraising	Board Secretary & Development Committee Member	3 years
Starson Audate	1414 CC Road, Kingston Springs, Tennessee 37082	Fortitude Re, Senior Associate of Corporate Strategic Analysis	Finance	Finance Committee	3 years
Brian Bradshaw	7594 Old Hickory Blvd, Whites Creek, Tennessee, 37189	Mount Zion Baptist Church Nashville, Executive Director of External Affairs and Ministerial Development	Public Relations & Personnel Human Capital	Governance Committee Member	3 years
Andrea Coleman	146 Pepper Ridge Circle, Antioch, Tennessee 37013	Amergis Staffing with Metro Nashville Public Schools, Exceptional Education Teacher	Parent/Community Involvement & Education	Academics Committee Member & Founding Parent Representative	3 years
Christian Hill	402 Portsdale Drive, Brentwood, Tennessee 37027	Keller Williams Realty, Realtor & Experience Manager	Real Estate	Development Committee Member	3 years
Darius Moore	149 Harvard Drive, Gallatin, Tennessee 37066	Pruitt Financial Group, Director of Recruitment and Talent Selection	Fundraising	Development Committee Chair	3 years
Dexter Peterson	341 Great Circle Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37228	Metro Nashville Public Schools, Exceptional Education Contractor Consultant	Education	Academics Committee	3 years
Tatyana Polite	7000 Harris Hills Lane, Nashville, Tennessee 37211	Ardent Health Services, Human Resources Business Partner	Personnel & Human Capital	Governance Committee	3 years
Patricia Pryor	810 General Cabot Court, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129	KIPP Antioch College Prep, Assistant Principal	Education	Academics Committee	3 years

Erica Roberts	3508 Almar Knot Drive, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128	KIPP Antioch College Prep, Assistant Principal/Principal in Residence	Education	Academics Committee	3 years
Loni Vazquez-Hall	3421 Bluespruce Way, Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128	New Heights Leadership Development, Independent Financial Strategist	Finance	Finance Committee	3 years
Jeremy Sager	7257 Santeelah Way, Antioch, Tennessee 37013	Novus SMART Academy, Proposed Executive Director	Education & Grant Writing	Proposed Executive Director & Ex Officio Member	3 years

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.2a: Describe the facility needs for the proposed school based on its academic focus, academic plan, and projected enrollment. List requirements such as number of classrooms, square footage per classroom, classroom types, common areas, overall square footage, and amenities. Identify additional school spaces and their square footage, including science labs, art room, computer labs, library/media center, cafeteria, performance/dance room, gymnasium and athletic facilities, auditorium, main office and satellite offices, work room/copy room, supplies/storage, teacher work rooms, restrooms, and other spaces.

Novus SMART Academy has identified the essential requirements for Year 1 facilities needed to ensure compliance with ADA standards and to provide an optimal learning environment for scholars and staff. These requirements are based on projected enrollment, programmatic needs, and operational priorities:

- **Classroom Space:** 8 general education classrooms and 1 specialty classroom/community space to support instruction and community engagement.
- **Office and Support Areas:** 2 office spaces and 2 additional support spaces to accommodate special education services and administrative functions.
- **Storm Shelter:** A dedicated area to ensure safety in compliance with local and state regulations.
- **Restrooms and Storage:** Two bathrooms and adequate storage to meet the needs of scholars and staff.

Budgeted Square Footage. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s facilities plan includes 10,625 square feet in Year 1 of operation to accommodate these foundational requirements. This square footage was calculated to align with best practices for educational facilities while maintaining cost efficiency.

Tenant Improvement Costs. Tenant improvement costs of **$850,000** were determined based on industry benchmarks for school facility renovations, local market research, and guidance from Ethan Levine, our Architect with Manuel Zeitlin Architects in Nashville, Tennessee, experienced in building or renovating educational spaces. These costs will cover the following:

- **Classroom and Office Buildout:** Modifications to create ADA-compliant classrooms, offices, and support spaces, ensuring they meet the needs of scholars and staff.
- **Community and Specialty Space:** Flexible design for the specialty classroom to function as a community space and host extracurricular programs.
- **Safety and Compliance:** Construction or retrofitting of a storm shelter and ensuring compliance with building codes and safety regulations.
- **Restroom and Storage Spaces:** Building or updating restrooms and storage areas to meet the capacity requirements for Year 1.
- **Infrastructure Enhancements:** Installation or upgrades to HVAC, lighting, electrical, plumbing and sprinkler system, and IT systems to ensure a safe, efficient, and technology-ready environment.

Cost Incorporation into the Budget. The $850,000 for tenant improvements is included in the Year 0 operating budget under Building Improvements, funded through a combination of facility grants, startup funding, and private donations like Building Hope (see Attachment D for Letter of Commitment). Costs will be staggered to align with the construction and renovation timeline, ensuring the academy's financial health is maintained during the buildout process. The Finance Committee, with guidance from EdTec, will ensure a contingency buffer is built into the tenant improvement budget to account for unforeseen costs or price fluctuations.

Multi-Year Facility Strategy. The facility plan detailed in **Figure 42** outlines the components necessary for Years 1-5, ensuring the space can adapt to growth while minimizing future relocation or extensive renovations. The initial investment in tenant improvements is designed to meet immediate needs while creating a scalable foundation for expansion.

Figure 42 – Space Needs: Years 1 Through 5

Grade	Enrollment Projections				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Kindergarten	96	96	96	96	96
Grade 1	96	96	96	96	96
Grade 2	0	96	96	96	96
Grade 3	0	0	96	96	96

Section 2.2 – Facilities (Required for All Sponsors)					
Grade 4	0	0	0	96	96
Grade 5	0	0	0	0	96
Grade 6	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 7	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 8	0	0	0	0	0
Total Enrollment	192	288	384	480	576
General Education Classroom Space Needed					
# of GenEd Classrooms	8	12	16	20	24
Square Footage Per Classroom	750	750	750	750	750
Total Space	6,000	9,000	12,000	15,000	18,000
Specialty Classrooms & Community Space					
# of Classrooms	1	2	3	4	4
Square Footage Per Classroom	750	750	750	750	750
Total Space	750	1,500	2,250	3,000	3,000
Administration					
Offices	1	1	2	2	2
Square Footage Per Office	375	375	375	375	375
Total Space	375	375	750	750	750
Support Space (SWD/ELL Pull Out/Intervention)					
Special Education Classroom	1	1	2	2	2
ELL Classroom	1	1	2	2	2
Square Footage Per Classroom	750	750	750	750	750
Total Space	1,500	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,000
Other					
Bathroom and Storage	2	2	2	4	4
Square Footage Per Support Space	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Space	2,000	2,000	2,000	4,000	4,000
Minimum Square Footage Space Required					
Overall Total Space	10,625	14,375	20,000	25,750	28,750

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.2b: Explain how the above-described facility and tenant improvement costs were determined and describe how the improvements are included in the proposed school's operating budget.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), applicable city planning review procedures, and health and safety mandates as outlined in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107. To achieve these objectives, we have developed a comprehensive plan that incorporates $850,000 in associated facility and tenant improvement costs into the proposed school's operating budget (Figure 46). This ensures the creation of an educational environment that aligns with our mission to produce global achievers through high-quality instruction, strong character development, and relentless ambition for success.

Cost Determination Process. The $850,000 allocation for facility and tenant improvements was determined through a detailed analysis of the school's infrastructure needs, regulatory compliance requirements, and cost benchmarks provided by industry professionals.

Integration into the Operating Budget. The $850,000 allocated for facility and tenant improvements has been strategically incorporated into the operating budget to ensure financial feasibility. Key considerations include:

- **Phased Implementation:** To minimize upfront financial strain, improvements will be completed in phases, aligned with enrollment growth and funding availability.
- **Grant Funding and Partnerships:** Novus SMART Academy has identified potential grant opportunities and partnerships to offset costs, reducing reliance on operational funding.
- **Budgetary Alignment:** The allocation of $850,000 specifically for building improvements reflects a careful balance between immediate needs and long-term enhancements. This ensures that the school remains within budget while prioritizing safety, accessibility, and academic excellence.

Commitment to Excellence. By incorporating these improvements into our operating budget, Novus SMART Academy demonstrates a commitment to creating a positive, safe, and high-quality learning environment. Our approach ensures regulatory compliance while supporting the school's vision of fostering college and career readiness from Kindergarten onward.

Figure 46 – Facilities and Tenant Improvement Costs

Task	Objective	Key Actions	Proposed Costs
Initial Facility Assessment	Perform comprehensive assessments of potential properties to identify necessary improvements for ADA compliance and adherence to city and county regulations.	The Facilities Task Force and Finance Committee, along with community advisor Brandon Harvey and architect Ethan Levine, will conduct initial evaluations of properties. Professional code assessors, including Cameron Quick (Tennessee Charter School Center) and Adam Dodd (Rutherford County), will be consulted to ensure a thorough understanding of existing conditions and needed improvements. Findings will be presented to the Board of Directors to guide property selection and budget alignment.	Professional code assessments: **$10,000** (allocated within Year 0 start-up budget).
ADA Compliance Plan	Guarantee all facilities meet ADA standards, ensuring accessibility for all students, staff, and visitors.	Ensure all classrooms, restrooms, hallways, entrances, parking spaces, and common areas are ADA-compliant. Include ramps, elevators (if multi-level), accessible doorways, and	ADA-compliant renovations: **$75,000** (included in tenant improvement costs).

Section 2.2 – Facilities (Required for All Sponsors)			
		signage in the design or renovation plan. Consult with ADA specialists during the design phase to confirm adherence to regulations.	Signage and parking adjustments: **$15,000**.
City Planning and Zoning Compliance	Align with Smyrna and Rutherford County city planning and zoning requirements.	Collaborate with the local planning department to confirm zoning for educational use. Conduct environmental impact studies and address traffic flow, parking, and stormwater management if required. Submit detailed architectural plans for review and approval during the permitting phase.	Zoning and permitting fees: **$10,000**. Traffic and environmental studies: **$20,000** (if required).
Health and Safety Compliance (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107)	Meet all state health and safety requirements to provide a secure learning environment.	Implement required fire suppression systems, proper ventilation, and HVAC systems. Conduct regular inspections for indoor air quality, fire safety, and water systems. Ensure facilities include a storm shelter that meets state standards.	Fire safety and HVAC improvements: **$50,000**. Storm shelter compliance: **$450,000**.
Ongoing Monitoring and Final Certification	Ensure all facilities meet regulatory standards before occupancy.	Schedule inspections during and after construction with local officials. Address any deficiencies promptly to avoid delays in opening. Obtain final certification of occupancy before June 2026.	Final inspections and certifications: **$5,000**.
Additional Design and Construction Costs	Oversee the construction process with the Facilities Task Force and construction management team.	Schedule regular site visits and inspections to ensure project adherence to timeline, budget, and compliance standards. Address any unforeseen challenges promptly with input from advisory partners and task force members.	Design and Construction: **$215,000**.

Charter School Facilities Grant. The Charter School Facilities Grant, funded by the State of Tennessee, offers a unique opportunity for charter schools to secure financial support for facilities-related projects. Under the leadership of the Grant Project Director, Crystal McCarver, the grant program aims to address the critical infrastructure needs of charter schools through a competitive and discretionary award process. The maximum award amount is set at $500,000, but the actual allocation for each recipient will depend on the number of applicants, the specific needs outlined in their proposals, the availability of funds, and their competitive scoring during the evaluation process.

Awarded funds can be utilized for a variety of purposes related to facilities acquisition, improvement, or repayment. These uses include the purchase or lease of property for educational facilities, general capital improvements to existing buildings, and repayment of debt associated with prior capital outlay projects. Schools may use the funds to acquire real property for new construction, establish permanent or relocatable school facilities (such as portables), or acquire underutilized or vacant properties as defined by Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-13-136. Additionally, the funds may cover lease or mortgage payments, debt servicing for existing capital projects, and reimbursements for renovations or planned future improvements.

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

To qualify, capital outlay projects must meet specific criteria. Schools must either own the property or facility they plan to develop or modify, be actively engaged in purchasing the property through lease-purchase agreements, or hold a long-term lease with at least two years remaining. If the project involves facilities owned by the charter school authorizer, a formal memorandum of understanding must permit the proposed improvements. Furthermore, the project must address essential health and safety requirements for students or create an academic environment conducive to learning.

Examples of eligible construction and renovation projects include critical upgrades such as HVAC replacement or repair, improvements to electrical, plumbing, or roofing systems, and security enhancements. Projects may also involve asbestos removal, classroom additions or modifications, redesigns of spaces for physical activity, and safety assessments related to the structural soundness of buildings or lead content in drinking water. Additional allowable expenses include fees for code compliance and associated inspections. Conversely, some projects fall outside the scope of allowable expenditures. For instance, exterior landscaping, or renovations to spaces not directly benefiting student learning or well-being, such as administrative offices, are not eligible for funding.

Grant recipients are held to strict accountability requirements to ensure proper use of funds. All applicants must complete a detailed funding application within the Tennessee Department of Education's ePlan system, which requires alignment with specific budget account codes and line items. Any submitted budgets may need adjustments to comply with these requirements. The grant operates on a reimbursement basis, meaning recipients must first complete and pay for the approved work before requesting reimbursement through ePlan. Submissions must include proof of completed work and payments made. Additionally, the Tennessee Department of Education retains the authority to request any documentation necessary to verify compliance with the grant terms. Comprehensive guidance on these procedures, including how to navigate ePlan, will be provided to recipients through the Charter School Facilities Grant Recipient Guide. This resource ensures recipients have the tools and knowledge needed to manage and account for their funds effectively. Through this grant, the State of Tennessee continues its commitment to fostering safe, high-quality educational environments for all charter school students.

Section 2.2c: Describe the board or school leadership team's experience in facility acquisition, management, and renovation/construction management. Detail which members of the school's board and leadership team will manage the facility acquisition process.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) benefits from the extensive expertise of our Facilities Task Force and networked advisors in facilities acquisition, management, and renovations. The collective experience of this team positions the academy to successfully secure and prepare a high-quality, cost-effective learning environment aligned with its mission. This team's combined expertise ensures that facilities acquisition and improvement processes are executed efficiently, responsibly, and with a focus on long-term success.

An overview of the relevant experience and contributions of key team members are as follows:

- **Tyler Baier (Level Field Partner).** Partner at Level Field, a consulting firm specializing in facilities development and financing for charter schools. Brings deep expertise in navigating the complexities of school facilities acquisition and renovation, including project financing and securing optimal locations. Proven track record of supporting charter schools to design and implement cost-effective, high-quality facilities solutions.
- **Charles Frazier (Board Chair).** Legal expertise in contract review and compliance, ensuring facility agreements align with organizational objectives and regulatory standards. Extensive experience advising on property transactions and organizational governance related to real estate.
- **Josh Fulmer (Real Estate Advisor).** Over a decade of experience in commercial real estate transactions, including acquisitions, lease agreements, and property management. Deep understanding of market dynamics to secure prime locations and favorable terms for educational facilities in Rutherford County, Tennessee.
- **Christian Hill (Board Member).** Licensed real estate professional with expertise in market analysis, property acquisition, and lease negotiations. Skilled in identifying and securing suitable spaces tailored to organizational needs while ensuring fiscal responsibility.
- **Daniel Kadeba (Board Treasurer).** Financial planning and budget management expert, ensuring cost-effective use of funds for acquisition and tenant improvements. Experience structuring budgets for large-scale projects, ensuring sustainability and operational efficiency.
- **Ethan Levine (Architect).** Professional architect with a track record of designing functional, innovative, and compliant educational spaces. Knowledgeable in ADA compliance, space optimization, and designing facilities that align with the academy's mission and goals.
- **Jeremy Sager (Proposed Executive Director).** Over 17 years in education, including experience managing school operations and facility logistics. Leadership roles in high-performing schools that required oversight of physical spaces to support educational excellence.
- **Advisory and External Partnerships**

- **Brandon Harvey (Kingdom Development Group, Incorporated - KDGi).** Co-founder of KDGi, with significant experience in creating sustainable and transformative spaces that unify and enrich communities. KDGi's expertise in project management, transformative design, and stakeholder collaboration ensures high-quality outcomes for the academy's facilities.
- **Cameron Quick (Chief Operating Officer, Tennessee Charter School Center).** Expertise in facilities procurement for charter schools, providing guidance on securing affordable and strategically located properties. Proven success in supporting other Tennessee charter schools through acquisition and build-out processes.

Relevant Experience in Build-Out and Renovation Management. *Facilities Task Force members bring experience in managing tenant improvements, including budgeting, contracting, and project timelines. Overall, the Facilities Task Force has experience collaborating with contractors, architects, and facility experts to design and renovate spaces that meet ADA and educational standards. KDGi's and Level Field's involvement ensures the application of sustainable practices and community-centric design, fostering environments that reflect the school's mission and vision.*

Section 2.2d: Describe the process and timeline for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or real estate consultants employed to assist in finding a facility. Include a contingency plan for alternative facilities if the primary location becomes unavailable or acquisition is unsuccessful.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to ensuring that its facilities meet all regulatory, safety, and operational requirements to provide a high-quality educational environment. Below is the detailed plan and timeline for identifying, securing, and ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, including ADA compliance, health and safety standards, and city planning reviews in Smyrna and Rutherford County, Tennessee. By leveraging the expertise of its Facilities Task Force, external advisors, and strategic partnerships, Novus SMART Academy will ensure its facilities are ready to meet all operational, regulatory, and safety standards on schedule. This comprehensive plan guarantees a smooth process, from strategic planning to welcoming scholars into a state-of-the-art learning environment in August 2026 in Figure 43.

Figure 43 – Facilities Strategic Plan

Phase 1: Facilities Strategic Plan Development (August 2024 – December 2024)	
Goals	**Key Activities**
• Develop a comprehensive facilities strategic plan, including project scope, goals, and timeline. • Define facilities requirements based on enrollment projections for Years 1-5.	• **Assemble the Novus Facilities Task Force** • Tyler Baier (Level Field Partner) • Charles Frazier (Board Chair) • Josh Fulmer (Real Estate Advisor) • Christian Hill (Board Member) • Daniel Kadeba (Board Treasurer) • Ethan Levine (Architect) • Cameron Quick (Tennessee Charter School Center) • Jeremy Sager, Proposed Executive Director • Finance Committee: Develop a facilities budget in alignment with the startup plan and funding allocations. • **Conduct initial project definition sessions to determine specific space needs:** • Five general education classrooms • One specialty classroom/community space • Two support spaces for special education • Two office spaces • ADA-compliant bathrooms and storage areas • Storm Shelter • Identify and research regulatory requirements for facility approval, including Smyrna and Rutherford County city planning, zoning, and permitting standards.
Phase 2: Identification and Securing of Facilities Options (January 2025 – April 2025)	

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

Goals	Key Activities
Identify viable facility options and negotiate terms to secure the selected property.	**Facilities Search** • Partner with local experts to identify and evaluate potential properties that meet size and location requirements. • Assess properties for regulatory and zoning compliance, accessibility, and renovation potential. **Needs Assessment** • Conduct a detailed assessment to ensure facilities can meet the needs for Years 1-5, with scalability for future growth. • Ensure compliance with ADA, health, and safety standards during the evaluation process. **Negotiations and Securing Facility** • Enter negotiations with property owners to secure the best terms within the allocated budget. • Finalize property selection by April 2025 with the support of the Facilities Task Force and Finance Committee. **Expert Consultations:** Leverage their expertise in facilities acquisition, regulatory compliance, and large-scale project management. • Thomas Branch, Chief Operating Officer at Valor Collegiate Academies • Lakenna Booker, Executive Director at Memphis Merit Academy • Dr. Calandra Sales, Head of Schools at Independence Preparatory Academy
Phase 3: Design, Permits, and Construction (May 2025 – June 2026)	
Goals	**Key Activities**
Oversee design, permitting, and construction to ensure facilities are operational by June 30, 2026.	**Design (May 2025 – August 2025)** • Collaborate with Ethan Levine and the architectural team at Manuel Zeitlin Architects to finalize the facility design. • Ensure the design adheres to ADA, health, and safety regulations. • Conduct stakeholder reviews to confirm the alignment of design plans with school needs. **Permitting (August 2025 – October 2025)** • Submit applications for necessary permits, including zoning approvals, building permits, and environmental reviews. • Work closely with Smyrna and Rutherford County city planning officials to ensure timely approvals. **Construction (November 2025 – May 2026)** • Oversee the construction process with the Facilities Task Force and construction management team. • Schedule regular site visits and inspections to ensure project adherence to timeline, budget, and compliance standards.

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

	• Address any unforeseen challenges promptly with input from advisory partners and task force members. **Final Inspection & Occupancy (June 2026):** Ensure compliance with ADA, city planning, and safety requirements; obtain final certifications.

Compliance and Readiness (Ongoing Throughout the Timeline)

Regulatory Compliance

- Conduct routine checks to ensure the facility complies with Tennessee Department of Education regulations, ADA requirements, and local zoning laws.
- Schedule inspections by local authorities to certify compliance with health and safety regulations before occupancy.

Stakeholder Communication: Maintain regular updates with the Board of Directors, staff, and community stakeholders on progress and milestones.

Contingency Planning. *To ensure readiness in the event of delays or unexpected challenges, we have developed a robust contingency plan with multiple options to secure a suitable facility for Novus SMART Academy.*

- **Co-location with American Classical Academy Rutherford**. Our Facilities Task Force is currently having ongoing conversations with Patrick Whalen and other American Classical Academy Rutherford members to consider colocation. This includes utilizing a smaller space, implementing a longer incubation timeline, adjusting enrollment targets as needed, and exploring creative additional financing solutions.
- **Exploring Alternate Facilities.** If primary facilities options cannot be secured, the Board will leverage relationships with other local churches, institutions, and businesses to identify potential Year 1 locations.
- **Raising Additional Funds.** If additional financial support is needed for a contingency facilities plan, we will engage partners and local foundations to raise the necessary resources. Once a facilities plan is finalized, the Proposed Executive Director will communicate the change to parents/guardians, emphasizing that the quality of our academic program- not the facility itself- is the cornerstone of Novus SMART Academy's mission.
- **Modular Building Option.** We recognize the potential of utilizing cost-effective modular buildings to meet our facility needs. For example, Vesta Modular, formerly Innovative Modular Solutions (IMS), has extensive experience supporting charter schools such as Memphis Rise Academy Middle School and Aurora Collegiate Academy. The timeline for modular construction, from agreement to critical phase installation, typically spans three to five months, with most of the time spent fabricating and shipping the buildings from their Georgia-based manufacturing center.

If lease negotiations or tenant improvement projections become more challenging than anticipated, we can pivot to this option. Modular units would be designed to meet our educational and administrative needs while preparing a pre-identified ground site in parallel to ensure state and local compliance is completed before our planned August 2026 opening. We have tentatively set late January 2025 as the decision point to consider this contingency option. Upon authorization, we will immediately begin identifying commercially-zoned ground lease or purchase options in Rutherford County, Tennessee. This comprehensive approach ensures that Novus SMART Academy remains adaptable, securing a facilities option that meets both immediate and long-term needs while maintaining our commitment to delivering a high-quality academic experience.

Section 2.2e: Describe the plan to ensure that the selected facility meets all necessary compliance and regulatory requirements. Provide a detailed explanation of how the facility complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all applicable city planning review procedures, and all health and safety requirements as required by T.C.A. § 49-13-107. Outline any necessary facility changes that support the school's academic plan, projected enrollment, ADA compliance, and regulations outlined in SBE 0520-01-04-.01. Include all associated costs in the operating budget template in section 3.1.

Detailed Plan for Compliance with ADA, City Planning Review, and Health and Safety Requirements. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring full compliance with all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, applicable city planning review procedures, and health and safety mandates as outlined in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107. The following steps in Figure 44 outline our compliance plan, including the $500k in associated costs incorporated into our budget. With a budget allocation of approximately $850,000 of the total amount for Building Improvements, this plan

prioritizes accessibility, safety, and regulatory adherence while aligning with our mission to provide a high-quality educational environment.

Figure 44 – Facilities Compliance and Regulatory Requirements

Task	Objective	Key Actions	Proposed Costs
Initial Facility Assessment	Perform comprehensive assessments of potential properties to identify necessary improvements for ADA compliance and adherence to city and county regulations.	The Facilities Task Force and Finance Committee, along with community advisor Brandon Harvey and architect Ethan Levine, will conduct initial evaluations of properties. Professional code assessors, including Cameron Quick (Tennessee Charter School Center) and Adam Dodd (Rutherford County), will be consulted to ensure a thorough understanding of existing conditions and needed improvements. Findings will be presented to the Board of Directors to guide property selection and budget alignment.	Professional code assessments: **$10,000** (allocated within Year 0 start-up budget).
ADA Compliance Plan	Guarantee all facilities meet ADA standards, ensuring accessibility for all students, staff, and visitors.	Ensure all classrooms, restrooms, hallways, entrances, parking spaces, and common areas are ADA-compliant. Include ramps, elevators (if multi-level), accessible doorways, and signage in the design or renovation plan. Consult with ADA specialists during the design phase to confirm adherence to regulations.	ADA-compliant renovations: **$75,000** (included in tenant improvement costs). Signage and parking adjustments: **$15,000**.
City Planning and Zoning Compliance	Align with Smyrna and Rutherford County city planning and zoning requirements.	Collaborate with the local planning department to confirm zoning for educational use. Conduct environmental impact studies and address traffic flow, parking, and stormwater management if required. Submit detailed architectural plans for review and approval during the permitting phase.	Zoning and permitting fees: **$10,000**. Traffic and environmental studies: **$20,000** (if required).
Health and Safety Compliance (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107)	Meet all state health and safety requirements to provide a secure learning environment.	Implement required fire suppression systems, proper ventilation, and HVAC systems. Conduct regular inspections for indoor air quality, fire safety, and water systems.	Fire safety and HVAC improvements: **$50,000**. Storm shelter compliance: **$450,000**.

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)

		Ensure facilities include a storm shelter that meets state standards.	
Ongoing Monitoring and Final Certification	Ensure all facilities meet regulatory standards before occupancy.	Schedule inspections during and after construction with local officials. Address any deficiencies promptly to avoid delays in opening. Obtain final certification of occupancy before June 2026.	Final inspections and certifications: **$5,000**.
Additional Design and Construction Costs	Oversee the construction process with the Facilities Task Force and construction management team.	Schedule regular site visits and inspections to ensure project adherence to timeline, budget, and compliance standards. Address any unforeseen challenges promptly with input from advisory partners and task force members.	Design and Construction: **$215,000**.

Section 2.2f: Describe the plan to comply with county and/or municipal building code requirements related to storm shelters.

Novus SMART Academy is deeply committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors. As we prepare to open in August 2026, we recognize that compliance with local and state building codes, particularly those related to storm shelters, is an essential component of our facilities planning. This commitment includes adherence to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107 and the 2018 Shelter Code, which establish rigorous standards for storm shelter construction in K-12 schools. Our approach to meeting these requirements balances our dedication to safety with the financial and operational realities faced by newly established charter schools.

Request for Variance. Meeting the storm shelter requirements set forth in the 2018 Shelter Code for Rutherford County will require additional time, funding, and meticulous planning. To navigate these challenges, we plan to request up to a three-year variance to provide the time necessary to secure funding through the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) grant program. This variance is essential to ensuring that Novus SMART Academy can meet all storm shelter compliance requirements while maintaining financial stability and directing critical startup funds toward operational priorities. If granted, this variance would allow us to implement a phased approach to compliance, ensuring that we meet both immediate needs and long-term obligations.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The rationale for our variance request is rooted in the significant time required to secure funding through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), administered by TEMA. This program can provide up to 75% of the eligible costs for storm shelter construction but involves a lengthy application and review process that typically spans 18 to 36 months from submission to fund disbursement. As a new charter school, Novus SMART Academy must carefully manage limited startup resources across competing priorities. The variance would allow us to proceed with essential operational needs while applying for and securing grant funding to fully comply with the 2018 Shelter Code.

Plan for Compliance. Our compliance plan for storm shelter requirements begins with a comprehensive review of all applicable building codes at the local, state, and federal levels. The Facilities Task Force at Novus SMART Academy, supported by licensed professionals, will analyze regulations outlined in the International Building Code (IBC), ICC-500, and FEMA guidelines (P-361). We will collaborate with local building officials to confirm applicable standards and ensure our plans align with legal and functional requirements for storm shelters in educational settings.

Storm Shelter Design. The design phase of the storm shelter will leverage the expertise of Ethan Levine, an experienced architect on our Facilities Task Force, to create a structure that meets ICC-500 standards. The shelter will be integrated into the overall school design, ensuring accessibility, capacity for all occupants, and compliance with structural requirements to withstand wind speeds up to 250 mph. The design will also incorporate life-safety systems such as emergency lighting, ventilation, backup power, and communication systems. Preliminary designs will be submitted to local building officials for review, and their feedback will guide the final design to ensure it meets all requirements.

Once designs are finalized, we will hire contractors experienced in storm shelter construction, particularly in educational environments. Detailed construction plans will be submitted to local authorities for permitting, and we will coordinate

inspections throughout the construction phase to ensure ongoing compliance. Construction will adhere strictly to approved plans, using materials and techniques verified to meet ICC-500 and FEMA P-361 standards. Following completion, the storm shelter will undergo a final inspection and certification process, culminating in the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Storm Shelter Management Plan. In parallel with construction, Novus SMART Academy will develop and implement a storm shelter management plan. This plan will include training for staff and students, regular drills, and clear signage to familiarize all occupants with shelter procedures. We will also establish maintenance schedules and conduct routine inspections to ensure the shelter remains functional and compliant with any updates to building codes.

Other Viable Options. Recognizing the financial and logistical challenges of storm shelter construction, Novus SMART Academy is exploring several avenues to meet requirements. These include the potential use of prefabricated storm shelters, which offer a cost-effective and expedited solution. For example, the Stormbox system, including delivery and installation, costs approximately $70,000 to $75,000 per unit, with a capacity of 49 students. This approach would allow us to achieve compliance more quickly while minimizing the financial burden on the school. Alternatively, we are investigating whether facilities within 1,000 feet of the school site could be designated as storm shelters or whether exemptions apply to facilities serving dual purposes, such as places of worship. These options would require close coordination with local authorities to confirm eligibility and compliance.

The financial burden of storm shelter construction remains a significant challenge for charter schools, particularly those like Novus SMART Academy that do not receive additional state or local funding for this purpose. FEMA's strict guidelines and extended timelines compound these challenges, as schools cannot begin construction until funding is approved. This restriction delays project timelines and jeopardizes the ability to meet opening deadlines.

To address these obstacles, we advocate for collaborative solutions between Tennessee agencies and FEMA, such as allowing schools to proceed with construction while awaiting reimbursement or granting temporary waivers to operate without completed storm shelters. These measures would provide charter schools with the flexibility needed to meet safety requirements without compromising operational readiness.

Section 2.2g: Present a timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility selection, requisition, renovation, state fire marshal and health inspections, and occupation.

The response in Section 2.2c addresses compliance with Rutherford County and municipal building codes, including storm shelter requirements in Smyrna, Tennessee, through a detailed plan and timeline. Below in Figure 45 is how these compliance factors and milestones are incorporated.

Figure 45 – Facilities Timeline and Key Actions

Realistic Timeline	Key Actions
Compliance with Building Codes and Storm Shelter Requirements (Initial Planning in August 2024 – December 2024)	The strategic planning phase identifies specific facility requirements, including ADA compliance, health and safety standards, and zoning regulations. This phase explicitly includes the design and location of a storm shelter, which is a legal requirement under Tennessee building codes for schools. Collaboration with the Facilities Task Force and architectural experts ensures that these requirements are fully integrated into the design plan.
Evaluation During Facility Search (January 2025 – April 2025)	Facilities options will be evaluated for compliance with local building codes, zoning ordinances, and storm shelter mandates in Smyrna and Rutherford County. Key stakeholders, including Ethan Levine (architect) and Tyler Baier (construction management expert), will assess properties for suitability, ensuring realistic renovation or build-out timelines for achieving code compliance.
Design and Permitting (May 2025 – October 2025)	The design phase (May 2025 – August 2025) includes detailed architectural plans that incorporate storm shelter requirements and adhere to municipal building codes. Permitting (August 2025 – October 2025) allows time for Smyrna and Rutherford County building departments to review and approve plans for zoning, storm shelters, fire safety, and ADA compliance. Collaboration with these entities ensures adherence to all codes.
Construction and Renovation (November 2025 – May 2026)	During the construction phase, periodic inspections will be scheduled to ensure compliance with building codes and safety regulations, including storm shelter

	standards. Any identified deficiencies will be addressed promptly to avoid delays in meeting the occupancy deadline.
Final Inspection & Occupancy (June 2026)	Ensure compliance with ADA, city planning, and safety requirements; obtain final certifications.

Key Considerations Ensuring Realism

1. **Timeline Padding:** The timeline allows for up to three months for design, two months for permitting, and eight months for construction, which aligns with typical school project timelines.
2. **Stakeholder Expertise:** The inclusion of experienced professionals (e.g., architects, real estate experts, and construction managers) ensures informed decision-making and adherence to building codes and regulations.
3. **Inspection Integration:** Built-in phases for municipal inspections during construction ensure the facility meets safety and code requirements before occupancy.

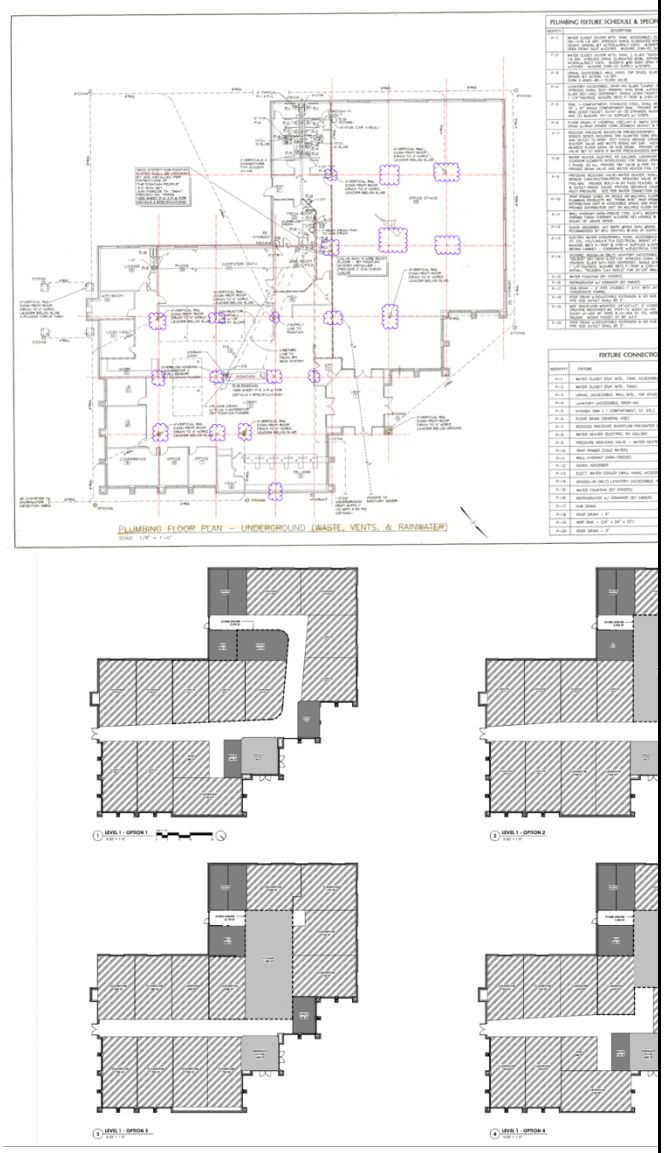
Section 2.2h: List the properties considered for the proposed school. If under a non-disclosure agreement, provide the general location. If no suitable property has been identified, describe the steps taken to confirm suitable facilities within the proposed geographic area.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has identified two facilities options, and both provide what we believe to be an achievable route to procurement and long-term viability. Christian Hill has been integral in the identification and assessment of these facilities options for Novus SMART Academy (K-8). We also informed our decisions from the guidance and input of experienced commercial Real Estate Broker Josh Fulmer with Parks Realty who has supported two of the three charter schools currently operating in Rutherford County, Tennessee. Our Facilities Task Force is also searching for co-location options with local community-based organizations in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities to reduce costs; however, please see the chart below to review two facilities options and their viability to host our school over time in Figure 46.

Figure 46 – Facilities Options

Option 1	Option 2
102 Ridley Street Smyrna, Tennessee 37167	105 Threet Industrial Road Smyrna, Tennessee 37167

Section 2.2 – Facilities
(Required for All Sponsors)



Total Available Space	Total Available Space
37,343 sq. ft. (without additional modular space)	13,500 sq. ft. (without additional modular space)
Budget Assumptions	**Budget Assumptions**
• The building is currently available, and the lease term is negotiable. • The rental rate is available upon request. • We have budgeted $500k for tenant improvements in Year 0.	• The building is for sale and vacant. • Price: $3,950,000 • We have budgeted $500k for tenant improvements in Year 0 and will have to expand to accommodate additional grade levels as we continue to grow over time.
Length of Facility Viability	**Length of Facility Viability**
Years 1-4 of Operation (grades K-4)	Years 1-2 of Operation (grades K-2)

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.3a: Provide a detailed timeline that outlines the specific tasks the school's governing body and leadership must accomplish to ensure the school starts on time. Include key areas such as staffing, student recruitment, and facilities changes, along with deadlines and specific milestones that must be achieved in each area to meet the opening date. Additionally, identify the individuals responsible for each task and specify their compensation amounts. Sponsors must ensure the revenues and expenditures for "Year 0" align with the Operating Budget Template in section 3.1.

Post-authorization, the Board will officially vote to approve all governance policies and procedures, the Board Chair and Proposed Executive Director will officially appoint Board Officers for the positions of Board Vice Chair and Board Secretary, and the Board will adopt Committee structures. The Board will also vote to officially hire Dr. Jeremy Sager as the Founding Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Figure 47 also outlines a list of detailed tasks the Board of Directors will be responsible in the Startup Plan

Figure 47 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Governance

Governance				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Finalize job descriptions for full board and adopt as policy.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Complete
Finalize Board handbook.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Conduct board composition analysis to determine growth areas.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Develop agenda format.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Develop board expansion plan.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Recruit and nominate board members	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Define decision making processes through decision and responsibility matrix.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Approve policies.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Arrange board liability insurance.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Develop board calendar that includes new member onboarding, retreats, workshops, etc.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Approve school leader job description.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Complete
Set school leader goals.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Establish school leader evaluation task force and timeline.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Finalize all committees and meeting cadence.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Finalize all meetings and send calendar invites/links.	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee and Executive Director Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Finalize Executive Director Evaluation	Board Chair w/ Governance Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress

As the Proposed Executive Director and Founding School Principal of Novus SMART Academy (K–8), Dr. Jeremy Sager will juggle multiple responsibilities, which is not uncommon in a new-start, single-site public charter school. In alignment with best practices for early-stage charter school leadership, Dr. Sager will lead and manage a range of foundational tasks essential to the successful launch and long-term sustainability of the school. To ensure operational and academic excellence, Dr. Sager will build a strategic Year 0 leadership team that will help execute the start-up plan. This team will include an Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to be hired with a start date of January 2026; an Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to be hired with a start date **of** April 2026; Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to be hired with a start date of April 2026; and an Office Manager to be hired with a start date of April 2026. Prioritizing the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to be hired with a start date of January 2026 will give Dr. Sager and the individual time to reset any start-up plans and deadlines so that once the rest of the team is onboarded they can begin and complete tasks successfully with very little prompting.

While the Board of Directors, through its Committees and Task Forces, may assist with Year 0 start-up planning to help ensure a successful Year 1 opening, the primary responsibility for executing Year 0 tasks rests with the school-based leadership team. The Board's core function will always be governance, providing oversight, strategic guidance, and support. A dedicated Year 0 team of five will work collaboratively and strategically to carry out critical start-up tasks, many of which have already been initiated or completed by Dr. Sager. This work is being done with guidance and support from BES Follow-On Support and in coordination with Board-established Committees and Task Forces. These include the Academics, Development, Finance, and Governance Committees, as well as a Facilities Task Force and a Community Engagement Task Force. While these groups will collaborate closely with Dr. Sager, their role is to advise, support, and provide governance, not to manage or execute daily operations. Execution of the start-up plan remains the responsibility of the school-based team.

To directly address concerns about oversight and monitoring of our start-up, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has strategically empowered its Board Committees and Task Forces to lead structured, accountable, and transparent oversight processes throughout Year 0. Each group will implement a clear scope of work, develop measurable goals, and report monthly to the full Board to ensure that all elements of the start-up plan are progressing toward operational readiness for our August 2026 launch.

Academics Committee Oversight in Year 0. The Academics Committee will conduct bi-weekly working sessions with the Proposed Executive Director to define and codify the school's academic achievement framework. This includes identifying benchmark assessments for Kindergarten readiness, creating a Year 1 scope and sequence aligned to our SMART Habits and academic priorities, and tracking metrics for early literacy and numeracy. The committee will also establish enrollment and student demographic dashboards and develop a student data reporting protocol to ensure the Board reviews enrollment by grade level, demographics, and projected vs. actual figures monthly. These efforts will ensure the Board remains accountable to our promises of academic excellence made in the charter.

Development Committee Oversight in Year 0. The Development Committee will establish a fundraising calendar aligned to start-up operational milestones and manage a prospect pipeline for individual, corporate, and foundation donors. To ensure real-time accountability, the committee will generate a monthly fundraising report that outlines progress against Year 0 development goals, segmented by funding source. Additionally, it will coordinate Board involvement in key donor cultivation and grant-writing efforts, ensuring that each Board member is engaged in securing resources necessary for launch success. This includes tracking progress toward our initial fundraising goals to close any operational gaps not covered by currently secured funding.

Finance Committee Oversight in Year 0. The Finance Committee will collaborate with EdTec to develop and implement a detailed pre-opening budget that outlines monthly expenditures, vendor contracts, and contingency planning aligned to phased startup activities (e.g., facilities, recruitment, staffing, curriculum procurement). This committee will oversee monthly financial reviews, flag any variances, and work with the Proposed Executive Director to revise budget projections in response to actual spending and fundraising. The committee will also collaborate with EdTec to finalize and propose financial management and internal control policies to ensure fiscal health, transparency, and compliance with state and authorizer requirements.

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Governance Committee Oversight in Year 0. The Governance Committee will implement a Year 0 Board effectiveness plan, which includes monthly board member self-evaluations, annual Board performance reviews, and new member onboarding and training aligned to state and authorizer expectations. This committee will lead the development of Board policies and monitor compliance with open meeting laws, conflict of interest policies, and required training certifications. It will also track attendance and engagement of Board members in committee and full Board meetings to ensure the Board remains a high-capacity, mission-aligned body during the critical pre-opening phase.

Facilities Task Force Oversight in Year 0. The Facilities Task Force will work with the Proposed Executive Director to manage the timeline and budget for identifying, securing, and preparing a school facility for Year 1. This includes overseeing negotiations, contractor management, and ensuring the build-out meets all educational, safety, accessibility, and zoning requirements. Monthly updates to the full Board will include cost analyses to ensure we remain within the 15–20% facilities spending threshold of the total operating budget, as well as milestone tracking toward a Certificate of Occupancy by June 2026.

Community Engagement Task Force Oversight in Year 0. The Community Engagement Task Force will support the Assistant Principal of Finance and Operations and the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement in the implementation of our robust engagement plan with weekly goals for community meetings, canvassing, school tours, and stakeholder partnerships. The task force will oversee the family recruitment pipeline and use enrollment management tools (such as CRM tracking) to ensure we exceed our enrollment target of 192 scholars by the July 2026 deadline. Additionally, the task force will present monthly reports to the full Board that include engagement metrics (e.g., number of events held, attendance, conversion rates from interest to application to enrollment), highlighting successes and areas for intervention.

Full Board Oversight of the Startup Plan. To ensure integration and alignment across all start-up domains, the Board will institute a standing agenda item in each monthly Board meeting focused on reviewing start-up performance metrics. Each Committee and Task Force will submit written reports with progress against goals, upcoming milestones, risks, and mitigation strategies. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will span academics, finance, facilities, development, enrollment, and governance. The Board will use a color-coded status report to evaluate overall readiness and proactively intervene when metrics indicate risk. This cross-functional monitoring process will ensure strategic alignment and accountability across the organization.

Curricula Planning and Implementation Start-up. The school leadership team will lead the planning and implementation of the schoolwide academics and school culture programming, procurement processes, and development efforts that support the school's mission and vision. The Proposed Executive Director will collaborate with the Academics Committee, the Founders of Memphis Merit Academy and Purpose Preparatory Academy, and leverage BES Follow-On Support to ensure that both academic and school culture frameworks are aligned to high-quality and excellence.

Our rigorous, research-based curricula will be rooted in Tennessee Academic Standards and selected using platforms like EdReports and recommendations from the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. These curricula will be designed to prepare scholars to think critically and creatively, collaborate effectively with their peers, and solve real-world problems. Instruction will be differentiated and delivered through a variety of inquiry-based and experiential models: Project-Based Learning (PBL) in Math, Science, and Technology; Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) in English Language Arts and Social Studies; Arts-Based Learning (ABL) in Arts and Electives; and Character Education integrated across all subjects. These approaches reinforce our commitment to developing academic mastery.

The Proposed Executive Director will ensure our academic and cultural programming aligns with the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy and supports the broader purpose of T.C.A. § 49-13-104—to improve learning for all scholars and close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students. In partnership with the instructional leadership team, the Proposed Executive Director will regularly analyze academic data to make needs-based curricular adaptations that accelerate growth and uphold high expectations for all scholars.

The school culture development will be interwoven throughout our academic program to foster strong character, leadership, and community values. Scholars will be immersed in a school culture that emphasizes personal responsibility, mutual respect, and relentless ambition, reinforced through daily routines, rituals, and community-building experiences.

The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will oversee procurement and vendor contracting for all educational materials and services, including assessments, curriculum tools, instructional technology, blended learning platforms, and library resources. All procurement activities will be completed by May 2026, ensuring the school is fully resourced in advance of its August 2026 launch. Figure 48 outlines our start-up timeline across key areas including academics and culture planning.

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 48 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Academics & Culture

Task	Owner	Approver	Due Date	Status
Academics & Culture				
Consult with SPED and ELL consultants to design program.	AP of Scholar Access	Executive Director	Ongoing	In Progress
Create academic and school culture dashboard.	Executive Director	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Create culture walkthrough form.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Complete
Create Google site to house curriculum instruction resources.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Create lesson plan submission and feedback process.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Define assessment strategy.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Define service requirements for all SPED and ELL students.	AP of Scholar Access	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Design Academic Playbook	Executive Director	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Design Culture Playbook	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Design instructional framework and yearly scope and sequence for all subjects, including PE.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Design instructional framework and yearly scope and sequence for Character Education.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Design unit/lesson internalization guides for all subjects.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Develop a testing schedule.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Develop student culture calendar.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Draft assessment calendar based on assessment strategy and school calendar.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Draft schedule of deliverables for summer learning and professional development.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Draft summer learning and professional development calendar.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Finalize code of conduct.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Complete
Finalize PBIS systems and structures.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Finalize unit pacing guides for all subjects, including PE.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Finalize vision of special education program.	AP of Scholar Access	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Identify assessment tools to be utilized.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Identify SPED and ELL population (through new student intake process).	AP of Scholar Access	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Identify SPED services and materials needed for program implementation.	AP of Scholar Access	Executive Director	Ongoing	In Progress
Plan schoolwide rituals and traditions (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly).	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Plan schoolwide professional learning and development calendar for teachers and staff.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Select curricular resources for all subjects.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Select pre-work reading and assignments for summer learning and professional development.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Summer Learning and Professional Development				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Create Daily Surveys	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create swag storage plan based on timeline of delivery	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	6/26/2026	Not Started
Create ordering and distribution plan for books.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Finalize distribution plan for swag (what days it will be distributed and how it will be distributed).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Review materials on how to lead effective PD with Leadership Team and presenters.	Executive Director	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Begin receiving quotes and ordering swag.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/31/2026	Not Started
Organize swag based on distribution plan.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Office Manager Collaboration	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Facilitate Professional Photos	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Determine furniture needs and delivery dates.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Finalize materials list for Operations to purchase (i.e., clickers, extra microwave(s), name tags, etc).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Ensure that all technology is fully operational.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	6/26/2026	Not Started
Draft daily and weekly "Run of Show" (i.e., technology, food, and set up).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Finalize expectations and procedures for Operations support throughout Summer Learning and Professional Development.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Finalize sign-up system for Operations support based on schedule needs.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Create Process for daily and weekly Closing Survey.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Finalize snack list (to have in stock every day of training) and exact meal schedule for provided meals meals.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Test all technology to ensure 100% operational (i.e., clear sound with no issues using microphone, projector, audio for videos, WiFi, etc).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	6/26/2026	Not Started
Session with Operations regarding expectations, vision, and run of show.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Upload all session materials to spreadsheet.	All School Leaders	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Ensure there is a clear / streamlined system to communicate pre-work to all participants for each week of training	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	6/26/2026	Not Started
Create expectations and guidance for all session leaders (i.e., planning and execution of all training sessions).	Executive Director	Executive Director	5/29/2026	Not Started
Session run throughs w/ Leadership Team.	Executive Director	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Check that content is uploaded and labeled correctly to each shared drive.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Communicate schedule and expectations to school leaders and provide turnkey materials to roll out to teachers/staff.	Executive Director	Executive Director	5/29/2026	Not Started
Work with Operations to ensure schedule/expectations are being communicated to new hires over the summer.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Start-up Recruitment and Onboarding. The Proposed Executive Director will leverage connections with various organizations including but not limited to local colleges/universities with education programs, Teach for America, Nashville Teacher Residency, Relay Graduate School of Education, and BES to recruit high-quality teachers, school leaders, and staff members. The Proposed Executive Director will hire the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance and aims to finalize the offer by December 2025 for a full-time start date in January 2026. The Proposed Executive Director will take the lead in hiring all teachers, school leaders, and staff members for Year 1 of operation and aims to finalize all offers by May 2026 for a full-time start date on July 6, 2026. Figure 49 provides details regarding the start-up plan for staff recruitment and onboarding.

Figure 49 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Staff

Staff Recruitment				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Draft Year 1 staff handbook.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress
Review handbook with consultants for revisions and edits.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Design interview process.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Develop detailed talent recruitment plan/strategy.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Create talent recruitment calendar with key recruitment events listed.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Identify talent and recruitment systems and sites to post applications.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Present talent and recruitment systems to Board of Directors for review and approval.	Executive Director	Board of Directors	9/30/2025	Not Started
Board approves staff handbook.	AP of Operations & Finance	Board of Directors	2/27/2026	Not Started
Finalize job descriptions for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Post Value Added Propositions on Website and Social Media Platforms	GrowthFuel Marketing in Collaboration with Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Begin recruitment for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Hold Staff Recruitment Informational Fair	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/31/2025	Not Started
Post job description for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions; prioritize Year 0 staff (i.e., AP of Operations and Finance, AP of Scholar Access, AP of School Culture & Community Engagement, and Office Manager).	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Identify interview team of community stakeholders for initial start-up staff interviews.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Create onboarding process.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Send referral emails and notifications to our professional networks.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Post job Vacancies and advertise open positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Finalize organizational chart.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Recruit and hire AP of Operations and Finance.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Not Started
Begin hiring process for other Year 0 FTE staff positons (i.e., AP of Scholar Access, AP of School Culture & Community Engagement, and Office Manager).	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Hold Recruitment Fair	Executive Director	Board of Directors	10/31/2025	Not Started
Develop leader evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Develop operations team evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
50% of staff receive offer letters.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Develop new hire welcome letter and packet (includes small swag item, book, etc.).	Executive Director	Executive Director	11/28/2025	Not Started
Complete onboarding with EdTec, or back-office services provider for financial compliance.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Not Started
100% of staff receive offer letters	Executive Director	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Develop teacher evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Develop teacher coaching structure and protocol.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Staff Onboarding				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Make an I-9 verification plan.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Research platforms to capture HR paperwork.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Not Started
Order technology and school swag.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Order staff and student technology.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Prepare benefits Open Enrollment materials.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Build technology training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Build Retirement Plan training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Build Benefits training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Send staff list to Tech Lab.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Schedule Retirement Plan and Benefits Q/A session.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Add all staff to all systems (payroll, retirement, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Add all earnings and deductions in payroll system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Upload teachers to curriculum vendor's roster for staff access.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Confirm all employees have onboarded in payroll system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Send initial onboarding instruction communications.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees Direct Deposit info.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit benefits enrollment status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees 403b status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employee manager assignments.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees tax profile status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit I-9 Section 1 completion.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
I-9 Section 2 completion.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employee time off.	Executive Director	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Coordinate tech onboarding plan.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Configure all software accounts for new hires.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Request software login credentials.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Send onboarding feedback survey to all staff.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Ship reading materials to the new staff.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started

Operations, Facilities, & Finance Start-up. The Proposed Executive Director will lead the facilities search for Novus SMART Academy (K–8) in close partnership with the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, the Novus Facilities Task Force, and the Finance Committee to ensure alignment between school operations, financial planning, and facility development. The search will be supported by trusted external partners including Josh Fulmer (Real Estate Broker), Ethan Levine (Architect and Co-Owner of Manuel Zeitlin Architects), Tyler Baier (Partner at Level Field), and Cameron Quick (Tennessee Charter School Center), who will contribute valuable real estate, architectural, construction, and charter facility expertise to the process. Board member Christian Hill, an experienced real estate professional at Keller Williams, will provide vital strategic insight to help navigate the local market and secure a high-quality facility solution for the school. To further strengthen operations and facilities planning, the Proposed Executive Director will also engage Lakenna Booker (Executive Director at Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee), Dr. Calandra Sales (Head of Schools at

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Independence Preparatory Academy in Huntsville, Alabama), and Thomas Branch (Chief Operating Officer at Valor Collegiate Academies in Nashville, Tennessee). Each of these leaders has successfully opened and operated high-performing charter schools. Notably, both Lakenna Booker and Thomas Branch bring deep expertise in overseeing multimillion-dollar construction projects and managing large-scale facilities and operational initiatives, ensuring the project remains on time and on budget. See Figure 50 for details.

Figure 50 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Operations, Facilities, & Finance

Operations				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Provide the proposed location of the School; identify any repairs/renovations that need to be completed by school opening, the cost of these repairs, the source of funding for the repairs, and a timeline for completion.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Written, signed copy of facility lease, purchase agreement and/or other facility agreements for primary and ancillary facilities as are necessary for School to operate for one year or more.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
School possesses appropriate documents that the School is of sufficient size and with a sufficient number of classrooms to serve the projected enrollment. Copies of documents are on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Submit annual Governing Board meeting schedule including dates, times, and locations to the Authorizer and ensure meetings are posted on School website using the BoardOnTrack platform.	Executive Director	Board of Directors	12/31/2025	In Progress
Evidence is provided that membership on the Governing Board of Directors is complete and complies with the School's Governing Board bylaws (i.e., Governing Board roster with contact information for all board members, identification of officers, and term of service).	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Resume of each Governing Board member is on file with the Commission.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Complete
Governing Board disclosure forms are complete and on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
The School has provided evidence of a student handbook. Student Handbook must contain, at a minimum, the following: School's mission statement, School's Contact Information, School Calendar, School Attendance Policy, Student Discipline Policy, and Student Rights and Responsibilities.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Complete
An annual school calendar approved by the Governing Board of Directors for the first year of the School's operation is on file with the Authorizer. School calendar must meet the compulsory school attendance requirements of state law, financial guidelines, and state regulations.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
The School has established a process for resolving public complaints, including complaints regarding curriculum. The process includes an opportunity for complainants to be heard. School's process is on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Annually, the School and Authorizer must set performance targets/mission-specific goals designed to help the School meet its mission-specific educational and organizational goals. Once agreed upon, those performance targets shall be incorporated into the Charter Contract through amendment. These targets must be set by July 1st of each year of the School's operation.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Evidence is provided that the School has obtained and maintains insurance in the coverage areas and minimum amounts set forth in the Charter Contract.	Executive Director	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress
Governing Board approved (with signature page and date) special education policies and procedures. In addition, evidence of submission of policies and procedures are on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
The School has written rules regarding pupil conduct, discipline, and rights including, but not limited to, short-term suspensions, students with disabilities, and a re-engagement plan.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Copy of Employee Handbook and related employee communication which include, at a minimum, expectations for employee performance and behavior, compensation and benefit information, emergency response information, annual calendar, hours and length of employment, supervisory obligations, and a description of both informal and formal complaint procedures that employees may pursue in the event of disagreements.	Executive Director	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Evidence that students representing at least 75% of the projected fall membership have enrolled is provided, including names, addresses, grade levels, and prior school attended; applicable for scholars in Grade 1.	Executive Director	Executive Director	5/29/2026	Not Started
The required Safe School Plan consistent with the School mapping information system is on file with the Authorizer.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
The School has provided evidence of an authorization process that identifies (1) individual(s) authorized to expend School funds and issue checks; (2) safeguards designed to preclude access to funds by unauthorized personnel and/or misappropriation of funds; and (3) individual(s) responsible for review and monitoring of monthly budget reports.	Board of Directors	Board of Directors	12/31/2025	Not Started
A copy of the annual budget adopted by the School Governing Board is on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
The School facilities have met all applicable. Department of Health requirements to serve food. Food Safety Permit is on file with the Authorizer.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
The School possesses all permits and licenses required to legally operate in the School Facility. Certificate of Occupancy is on file with the Authorizer.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Prior to a School opening, the Authorizer will conduct a site visit to verify that the School has completed or is on track to complete each pre opening condition and confirm the School is ready to open.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
State assessment schedule is on file with the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
An employee roster and proof of background check clearance for members of the School's Governing Board, all staff, and contractors who will have unsupervised access to children is on file with the Authorizer.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
The School has policy and procedures for requesting, maintaining, securing and forwarding student records.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
The School has provided evidence of a working system for the maintenance of a proper audit trail and archiving of grade book/attendance (i.e., attendance logs).	AP of Operations & Finance w/ AP of Scholar Access and AP of School Culture and Community Engagement Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
The School has provided evidence of an adequate staff configuration to meet the educational program terms outlined in the charter, its legal obligations, and the needs of all enrolled students (% of staff positions filled) and/or a plan for filling open positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
Evidence that instructional staff, employees, and volunteers possess all applicable qualifications as required by state and federal law is provided.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
The School has provided evidence that the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator; the Section 504 Coordinator; the Title IX Officer; the Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying (HIB) Compliance Officer; and State Assessment Coordinator have been named and submitted to the Authorizer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
Provide evidence that all employees have completed training on child abuse and neglect reporting or have comparable experience.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
Submit emergency contact information for the Executive Director and other members of the leadership team.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
Plan and implement clear arrival, dismissal, lunch, and explore transition times.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Submit a Quarterly statement of income and expenses.	Executive Director w/ FInance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Facilities				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Hire vendor for day to day tech troubleshooting (i.e., student tech, staff tech, classroom tech).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Create plan or hire vendor for tech infrastructure in building (i.e., wifi, card readers for entry, security camera, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Finalize Lease agreement with for identified space.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	In Progress
Secure security vendor.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	In Progress
Create breakdown of landlord vs school responsibility (i.e., HVAC, plumbing etc).	Executive Director	Board of Directors	12/31/2025	Not Started
Finalize daily schedule.	Executive Director w/ School Leadership Team Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	In Progress
Add new buildings to insurance policy, if applicable.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Not Started
Secure custodial vendor (i.e., including night cleaning and trash).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Select computers for staff.	Executive Director	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress
Determine assessment-related technology needs, including laptops and document cameras.	Executive Director w/ School Leadership Team Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Set up and train on PowerSchool SIS and/or Skyward.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Issue RFP for transportation services.	Executive Director	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress
Create School Safety Plan	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Develop Emergency Readiness Training for all staff (lockdowns, evacuation drills, missing students, etc).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Finalize Daily Systems template (arrival, student lunch, dismissal, etc).	Executive Director w/ School Leadership Team Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Finalize School Meal Tracking Plan for state reimbursement.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Order outdoor signage.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Order all classroom supplies needed (i.e., basic supplies, air purifiers).	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	6/30/2026	Not Started
Determine transportation route needs.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Order all building signage.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Order lockdown shades for all classrooms and offices and decide installation plan, if necessary.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Order keys for all staff and lanyards to put key on.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Finalize household income/FRPL form collection plan.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	2/27/2026	Not Started
Create inventory of supplies needs for nurse's office and purchase items.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	6/30/2026	Not Started
Confirm furniture/tech delivery dates.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Finalize maintenance contracts.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Finalize School Culture Plans (i.e., tardies, absences, and how we will follow-up).	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Operations Playbook (i.e., includes all systems, processes, and procedures).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Finalize Student Medication Procedures	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Office Manager Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Finalize back-up custodial and security plan (i.e., pre-fingerprinted coverage options).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Acquire student medical forms (i.e., checklist of forms to be included in Enrollment package).	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	6/30/2026	Not Started
Ensure staff is trained in CPR/AED usage (i.e., will include finding CPR/AED course).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/31/2026	Not Started
All copier leases finalized and copiers delivered and ensure proper electric outlets are installed for specific copiers.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Create student information filing system.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Create weekly accountability process to ensure all deadlines being met for internal work.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Ensure all students who qualify for door-to-door busing based on IEP and have it for Day 1 of school.	AP of Scholar Access w/ AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/3/2026	Not Started
Identify free/reduced lunch students.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/3/2026	Not Started
Ensure Building Inspections are complete.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Ensure Building is Ready for Occupancy.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Develop transportation route and schedule.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Ensure plan is in place to track all "Punch List" items that the general contractors needs to fix.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Finalize classroom unpack plan template.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Create a summer task list for Operations Team.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create student file storage plan, including health forms.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Schedule weekly pre-walkthroughs with leadership team starting Day 1.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Tech work complete (i.e., projectors, WiFi, phone lines, keycard entry system).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Finalize all transportation options for families.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Hold time for weekly internal summer progress walkthroughs focused on facilities readiness.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Emergency Clipboard: Ensure each room in the building has an updated version that includes evacuation routes.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Ensure door stops are installed on all classroom doors.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
All classroom furniture delivered and placed in classrooms.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Confirm fire extinguishers installed in all required locations, tagged and inspected.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Confirm AED installed in each building; quantity needed depends on size of building.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
All bathroom dispensers installed (i.e., soap, toilet paper, paper towels, sanitizer).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
All common area furniture delivered and set-up.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Have a plan for key distribution for staff on their first day in the building.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Ensure all doors are set to lock, especially for lockdown drills.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Confirm all room assignments by grade level for each classroom, office assignments, etc.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Schedule Department of Health inspection for food service.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Finalize Day 1 attendance plan.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Floor deep clean (wax + buff).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Punch List items complete.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Ensure all spaces have evacuation plan posted and safety folder.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	7/17/2026	Not Started
Confirm final design for all building signage.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Create SPED student filing system	Office Manager with AP of Scholar Access Collaboration	AP of Operations & Finance	4/30/2026	Not Started
Set up new building electricity, heat, and gas accounts.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Finalize contract with food service vendor(s) delivering student meals.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Create Safety Drill schedule, expectations and procedures.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/26/2026	Not Started
Finance				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Develop schedule of Board financial reviews.	Executive Director	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Draft v1 of Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Develop chart of accounts to track income, expenses, assets, liabilities, cash flows.	Finance Committee w/ EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Develop financial reporting templates (budget vs. actual) and policy.	Finance Committee w/ EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Draft Y0 Budget and Cash Flow Plan	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Establish payroll.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Not Started
Board Approves Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Approve Y0 Budget and Cash Flow Plan	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Draft 5-year Financial Model	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Develop pitch deck for potential funders.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Determine budget cycle.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Design process forms (purchase orders, expense forms) & policy.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Create fund development plan.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Identify private grants that we are eligible for.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Identify individual prospects for cultivation.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Plan and execute social media campaign to raise funds and build interest.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Create plan to cultivate network of friends and supporters.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Schedule a series of events for securing donations.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Cultivate and solicit potential donors.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Develop day-to-day accounting and financial management systems.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Participate in development campaign.	Executive Director w/ Development Committee Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	In Progress
Draft v1 of Y1 Budget and Cash Flow Plan	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Establish purchasing card and/or credit cards.	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Draft v2 of Y1 Budget and Cash Flow Plan	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started
Approve Y1 Budget and Cash Flow Plan	Executive Director w/ Finance Committee and EdTec Collaboration	Board of Directors	8/29/2025	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan
(Required for All Sponsors)

Recruitment of Scholars and Families. The Proposed Executive Director will lead recruitment efforts in partnership with the Academics Committee, which will have an essential role in recruitment efforts and during planning in Year 0, will function as the Community Engagement Task Force. We will collaborate with community organizations, such as the Smyrna Boys and Girls Club, and we will build other partnerships to enhance our community engagement efforts. Our goal is to achieve above 150% enrollment for our (192 scholars and families enrolled in Kindergarten and First Grade; at least 96 scholars and families waitlisted).

Meeting this milestone involves filling 100% of available seats (192 scholars and families) and creating a waitlist with 50% of the total enrollment goal (96 or more scholars and families). A lottery will be held on February 20, 2025, when all planned seats will be filled. Efforts will be made to identify partner organizations that can contribute to enhancing our scholars' educational experiences, which may include mentoring organizations, before and after school programs, and field experience opportunities. Figure 51 provides details regarding the start-up plan to recruit scholars and families.

Figure 51 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Recruitment of Scholars and Families

Community Engagement				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Finalize community engagement plan.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Design engagement tracking spreadsheet.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Draft and finalize community survey.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Design tent, retractable banner, and tablecloth.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Draft and finalize school flyer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Plan and implement parent engagement meetings and events.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	In Progress
Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Families				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Create outline of Student and Family handbook.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	3/13/2026	Complete
First draft of Student and Family handbook created.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Finalize Student and Family Handbook	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	In Progress
Create Student and Family Welcome Letter	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	Not Started
Create uniform ordering letter and directions.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	Not Started
Create Technology Agreement	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Create Technology Expectations & Fees	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Draft and Operationalize Scholar Orientation and Parent Orientations	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	5/29/2026	In Progress
Determine family communication system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Draft transportation letter.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create list of items to include in first days of school communication (academic calendar, uniform, arrival/dismissal systems, student handbook, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Coordinate sending of academic school year calendar to families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create "Meet Your Teacher" Powerpoint	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create specific communication for Health Form/Immunization Requirements	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create master communication containing first day of school documents (academic calendar, tech expectations, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create master communication plan for first day of school documents (with reminders).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create family communication plan for first days of school (include academic calendar, arrival/dismissal plans, family handbook).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Send family communication regarding first days of school (include academic calendar, arrival/dismissal plans and Student & Family Handbook).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/1/2026	Not Started
Send reminder family communication regarding first days of school.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/31/2026	Not Started
Enrollment				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Draft and share monthly newsletters.	Executive Director	Executive Director	Ongoing	In Progress
Finalize lottery protocol.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Develop enrollment process.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started
Secure lottery certification entity.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	In Progress
Practice lottery protocol.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Highlight lottery date on website and social media.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/1/2026	Not Started
Determine audit structure for IEP students.	AP of Scholar Access w/ Office Manager Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Determine process to check for IEPs if not indicated.	AP of Scholar Access w/ Office Manager Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Determine cadence of waitlist pulls, offer deadlines, and Welcome Events.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Determine procedure if students miss registration deadline.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started
Set date and plan "Welcome to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)" New Family Orientation	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create Family Resource Hub on website.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
Open first round of scholar applications.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
First round of scholar applications end.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Notify families of acceptance, if applicable, no Lottery is required.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Notify families that a Lottery will occur, if applicable.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/6/2026	Not Started
Conduct admissions lottery and establish waitlist.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/31/2026	Not Started
Acceptance or Waitlist Notifications sent to families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/31/2026	Not Started
Continue Recruitment/Outreach Campaign as needed.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Receive Acceptance Letters from Families	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Begin monthly warm outreach to prospective families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
Conduct waitlist pulls.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Student enrollment and onboarding.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/9/2026	Not Started
Begin requesting student records; send district w/d info for scholars.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	4/6/2026	Not Started

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)				
Begin distributing, collecting, reviewing and filing Home Language Survey.	Office Manager w/ AP of Scholar Access Collaboration	AP of Operations & Finance	4/6/2026	Not Started
Create files for student records.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Have all missing paperwork filled out (releases, medical, transportation, FRPL, etc.).	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	7/31/2026	Not Started
Distribute uniform tops at Mandatory Parent/Guardian Orientations on July 28-30, 2026, or at the Back-to-School Block Party on August 1, 2026.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Prepare "Welcome to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)" Materials	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Mail Welcome Letter to families as scholars enroll and include upcoming events and registration requirements.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Call all families to confirm attendance at AM Scholar Orientation and PM Parent Orientations on July 28-30, 2026.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Student Registration	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Late Student Registration	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Deliver swag to enorlled students, first round.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Begin recruiting campaign for Fall 2027	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	10/1/2026	Not Started

Compensation for the above listed activities is built into the Novus SMART Academy budget. Novus SMART Academy has also structured a Year 0 financial plan that balances projected revenues and necessary expenditures, securing a robust financial foundation for opening.

Budgeted Compensation for Leadership and Key Personnel Hired in Year 0

- **Executive Director Salary:** $85,000 (hired July 2025)
- **Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance Salary:** $39,000 (hired in January 2026; half of the annual salary of $78,000).
- **Assistant Principal of Scholar Access:** $18,750 (hired in April 2026; quarter of the annual salary of $75,000).
- **Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement:** $18,750 (hired in April 2026; quarter of the annual salary of $75,000).
- **Office Manager:** $11,250 (hired in April 2026; quarter of the annual salary of $45,000).

Startup Funds and Secured Grants. To fully support these expenses and other critical start-up needs, Novus SMART Academy has secured **$515,000** in start-up funding for Year 0 with an additional $500,000 in-planning and in-process as evidenced by Attachment W, on the Revenues tab. This has been carefully budgeted across key activities including staffing, facilities, community engagement, and curriculum procurement, ensuring alignment with our Operating Budget. Since submitting the initial application, Novus SMART Academy has significantly strengthened its financial position with the following funding commitments:

1. **$750,000 multi-year CSP Grant (Years 0-2):** Funds secured and available upon authorization, providing essential support for start-up costs.
2. **$750,000 multi-year Charter School Growth Fund Grant (Years 0-2):** Funds secured and available upon authorization, providing essential support for start-up costs.
3. **$15,000 BES Start-up Grant (Year 0 only): F**unds secured and available upon authorization, providing essential support for start-up costs.
4. **$250,000 Building Hope Investment:** As outlined in Attachment D, Building Hope expressed support for Novus SMART Academy. They believe our school will provide a unique teaching model for the underserved community in La Vergne and Smyrna. In conversations with the Proposed Executive Director, Dr. Jeremy Sager, they were compelled by the school's vision and execution plan to guide the organization to both academic success and financial sustainability. Building Hope is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification,

security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. If a site meets our underwriting criteria, Building Hope can develop the entire project for the school.

Fundraising and Contingency Plan. In addition to the confirmed funding, the leadership team will develop a comprehensive fundraising plan that outlines target grants and timelines, ranking each funding source by probability and estimated disbursement. This strategy includes targeted outreach to additional foundations and grant programs, ensuring sufficient cash flow in Year 0.

Building Hope expressed support for Novus SMART Academy and believes the school will provide a unique teaching model for the underserved community. In conversations with Jerry Zayets, the Vice President of Real Estate Development, Building Hope was compelled by our school's vision and execution plan to guide the organization to both academic success and financial sustainability.

Assured Financial Readiness. The Board and leadership team will actively monitor budget adherence, progress in enrollment and fundraising goals, and any necessary adjustments. With thoughtful budgeting, secure funding, and a clear roadmap for success, Novus SMART Academy is well-prepared to meet all financial and operational objectives in advance of opening, ensuring a stable and successful launch.

Section 2.3b: Describe any anticipated challenges during the start-up plan implementation and the strategies to address these challenges to ensure the school opens on time.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is prepared to confront and overcome potential start-up challenges with a proactive, solution-oriented approach, ensuring a timely opening. While the journey is complex, our commitment to our mission and community support will guide us through. In addition to these solution-oriented strategies, our team will stay vigilant to the unpredictable nature of start-up challenges through as follows:

- **Goal Tracking and Meetings.** Consistent progress monitoring will occur through regular meetings with the founding team and Board of Directors, allowing us to detect and respond to emerging issues.
- **Contingency Budgeting.** We have already created several contingency plans and scenarios, allowing for rapid adjustments to staffing and resources. Our decisions will always align with our mission, legal guidelines, and financial realities.

Our robust planning, rooted in research and collaboration with local and national founders, with our flexible approach, equips us to handle any hurdles we encounter. We remain confident in our founding team's expertise, our community's unwavering support, and capacity to adapt, keeping us steadfastly on track for a successful launch as seen in Figure 52.

Figure 52 – Anticipated Challenges and Action Plan

Anticipated Challenges	Novus SMART Academy Action Plan
Facilities	**Challenge:** Ensuring the facilities are fully operational and meets compliance standards by the scheduled opening date. **Mitigation Strategy:** To address this critical challenge, we have engaged in extensive planning and strategic partnerships to secure a suitable, compliant facility on time: 1. **Pre-emptive Coordination:** We are coordinating with experienced contractors and compliance experts to monitor and ensure that construction and facilities upgrades adhere to timelines and standards. Regular check-ins will help keep the project on track, and we have contingency options, such as temporary classroom space, prepared for unforeseen delays. 2. **Community Partnerships:** The Proposed Executive Director has proactively initiated discussions with local faith-based and non-profit organizations to explore co-location or short-term leasing options if needed. 3. **Board Expertise in Real Estate:** Novus Board Member Christian Hill, an experienced real estate professional with Keller Williams- alongside Josh Fulmer, an experienced real estate professional owner of The Fulmer Homes Group- brings extensive expertise and connections to our facilities search. Josh and Christian are leading efforts to identify and negotiate potential facility options within our targeted community, leveraging their network and knowledge of the local market. 4. **Professional Real Estate Search:** Additionally, the Proposed Executive Director is working closely with Josh Fulmer, a residential and commercial real estate agent and

	broker at Parks Realty, to explore all viable commercial real estate options within our proposed community, ensuring a thorough search for a suitable and affordable space. 5. **National Facility Partner Support:** We are partnering with Level Field Partners, an organization with a proven track record in over 130 successful charter school facility projects. Level Field Partners provides invaluable guidance on spacing requirements, facilities negotiation, and project planning to support our search for a suitable facility. Building Hope has also expressed interest in supporting our facilities efforts. Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. If a site meets our underwriting criteria, Building Hope can develop the entire project for the school. Over the last 15 years, Building Hope has invested over $360 Million in charter school facilities, impacting over 150,000 seats nationwide. 6. **Entrepreneurial Support Network:** Through the proposed Executive Director's fellowship with Build. Excel. Sustain., a program that assists entrepreneurial education leaders, we gain access to resources specifically designed for pre-launch and launch phases. This includes support in the facilities search, connection with real estate brokers, and expert advice for overcoming common facility-related challenges.
Attracting and Retaining Leadership & Talent	**Challenge:** Recruiting qualified, mission-aligned educators in a competitive hiring environment, particularly for specialized roles. **Mitigation Strategy:** To attract and retain high-quality, mission-driven staff, we have developed a multifaceted approach that leverages an accelerated hiring timeline, strategic partnerships, and robust professional development to meet our staffing needs effectively. 1. **Accelerated and Strategic Hiring Process:** Our hiring timeline has been strategically expedited, allowing us to engage candidates early. We are utilizing both local networks and national platforms to attract high-quality talent. Additionally, we recently hired a communications and marketing firm to amplify our recruitment efforts. 2. **Talent Pipeline Partnerships:** We are actively collaborating with local colleges, talent development organizations, and established education programs, such as Nashville Teacher Residency, Teach for America, Relay Graduate School of Education, and BES, to build a diverse pipeline of mission-aligned educators. Additionally, we are participating in recruitment events hosted by the Tennessee Charter School Center to reach qualified candidates. 3. **Defined Career Pathways and Support Structures:** To retain top talent, we have established career pathways with clear progression opportunities tailored to professional goals. Teachers will have access to individualized career development and mentorship, fostering a growth-focused, supportive work environment. 4. **Proposed Executive Director's Community and Educational Network:** The Proposed Executive Director will leverage their extensive network in the educational community, engaging mission-aligned candidates who have already shown interest in Novus SMART Academy. 5. **Contingency Planning:** In the event we face challenges meeting our hiring goals, our Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will provide direct instruction to cover key roles.
Funding	**Challenge:** The timeline for our charter authorization does not align with the application timelines for start-up funding sources such as the NewSchools Venture. This misalignment poses a challenge in securing guaranteed funding in the early stages. **Mitigation Strategy:** To address this funding timeline challenge, we have developed a flexible, sustainable financial plan that allows us to operate independently of these national grants while still actively pursuing additional funding to enhance our fiscal health. 1. **Experienced Board-Led Fundraising:** Our Board Members- Celest Davis and Christian Hill- bring substantial experience in fundraising and grant writing. They will play a critical role in our fundraising strategy, leveraging their networks and skills to identify and secure additional funding as needed during pre-launch and in Year 1. 2. **Self-Sustaining Enrollment and Staffing Model:** By designing our enrollment and staffing models to be sustainable without sole reliance on external fundraising, we ensure

Section 2.3 – Start-up Plan (Required for All Sponsors)	
	that, by Year 2, our operations are supported by predictable revenue streams, minimizing financial risk. 3. **Prepared for Enrollment Variability:** Although we anticipate full enrollment, our budget has been developed to accommodate potential enrollment fluctuations. This conservative approach allows us to maintain financial stability regardless of minor enrollment variances.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.4a: Describe the school's leadership structure. Attach the organizational chart for Year 1 as Attachment N and the organizational chart at full capacity as Attachment O. The organizational charts should clearly delineate the board, administration, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/educator councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school.

- **See Attachment N:** Click Here
- **See Attachment O:** Click Here

Section 2.4b: Describe the process and timeline for hiring the school leader, and outline the skills, qualifications, and characteristics the sponsor will seek in a leader. Detail who will lead the hiring process and serve as the decision-maker in the hiring. If the leader has already been identified, attach the leader's resume as Attachment P.

- **See Attachment P:** Click Here.

Although Novus SMART Academy has chosen Dr. Jeremy Sager as its Proposed Executive Director, we have clearly outlined leadership skills, qualifications, and characteristics we are looking for as follows:

Mission Alignment and Leadership Characteristics. Mission-aligned members of the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) community share the following values and beliefs. As the organization's leader, the Proposed Executive Director is expected to model all the following as well. Mission-aligned Novus SMART Academy (K-8) members:

- Dedicate themselves to the school's mission and vision, adopting a "whatever-it-takes" attitude in helping our scholars succeed.
- Understand that relationships are essential to working with scholars who have been disengaged from their education and are at-risk. Staff members pursue appropriate and healthy relationships with scholars, including advocating for them and their success.
- Believe our scholars have strengths and assets and build on these strengths in their work. Maintain a positive attitude and a solution-based approach to challenges in the workplace.
- Oversee open and consistent communication with scholars and their families about their academic progress, health success and needs, and parenting success and needs. Also communicate proactively with colleagues about scholar needs to ensure integrated support.
- Are committed to restorative justice as a means of addressing conflicts or challenges in the community, whether between scholars, staff members, or scholars and staff members.
- Are active participants in a supportive and demanding professional community that fosters respect, trust, honesty, risk-taking, open-mindedness, flexibility, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Leadership Skills and Qualifications. The Proposed Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is expected to meet the following required qualifications:

- Minimum of a Master of Education degree in educational leadership or school administration with a Professional Administrator PreK-12 (443) license; Superintendent (090) endorsement preferred.
- Have at least five years of executive leadership experience working in an entrepreneurial, dynamic public charter school.
- Educational leadership and school management experience in public charter schools, working with scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, staff and community members.
- Commitment to the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), and the belief that all scholars can and will learn at high levels.
- Ability to galvanize and inspire both a Board of Directors and school-based team.
- Approaches work with optimism, resilience and excellence; takes personal and professional accountability.
- Highly collaborative, results-oriented, adaptable, and a problem-solving self-starter who seeks feedback to continue professional growth and development.
- Experience working with scholars from diverse backgrounds with unique academic and personal needs.
- Ability to collect and analyze multiple forms of data to inform decisions that impact the organization.
- Experience with development and fundraising.
- Experience managing a complex budget, including working with restricted revenue streams.
- Ability to plan and enact budgeting practices to meet financial goals outlined in the accountability plan to sustain the overall health of the organization.
- Ability to perform accounting tasks and to allocate financial resources in support of the academic program.
- Ability to communicate effectively across stakeholders verbally and in writing.
- Demonstrated organizational skills with the ability to manage competing priorities at once.
- Strategic planner to ensure the school meets both long and short-term goals.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

- Deeply reflective and constantly seeks out ways to improve self, school, and overall organization.
- Critical thinker and able to adapt and make sound decisions under pressure.
- Technology skills with proficiency in email, word processing, spreadsheets, Google Suite, etc.
- Experience using Student Information Systems (SIS).

Dr. Jeremy Sager, the Proposed Executive Director and Founding School Principal of Novus SMART Academy (K–8), brings over 15 years of experience in public and higher education in Tennessee and a deep personal commitment to high-quality educational. As a first-generation college graduate who grew up in a blended family, Dr. Sager understands the power of education and the responsibility it carries. Driven by his lived experience and grounded in his belief that schools must serve the unique needs of underserved families, Dr. Sager joined the Build Excel Sustain (BES) Fellowship in 2023 to deepen his expertise in founding, designing, and a leading high-performing charter school. Through the BES Fellowship, he observed over 30 top-performing urban charter schools and completed more than 500 hours of intensive training, coaching, and development. This experience helped him recruit a highly skilled and mission-aligned Founding Board of Directors and design a school model that aspires to reimagine learning for scholars and families on their path to college and career success in collaboration with the community.

Dr. Sager currently serves as a Virtual Elementary School Principal while remaining committed to the journey of founding Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Prior to the BES Fellowship, Dr. Sager served as Lead Secondary Literacy Specialist for the Schools of Innovation in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, where he led literacy initiatives across priority schools. Prior to that, he was the Middle School Principal at Nashville Prep with RePublic Schools, where he achieved TVAAS Level 5 Reward School status in 2021–22 and was honored as a 2022 Public Charter School Changemaker by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. His career has spanned numerous roles in education, including classroom teacher, college admissions executive assistant, student finance coordinator, instructional coach, adjunct professor, curriculum specialist, academy dean, assistant principal, and ninth grade academy principal. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Secondary English Education from Crichton College, a Master of Education from Union University, and a Doctor of Education in Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning from Walden University. In addition, he completed the Emerging Leaders Program with New Leaders in 2015 and the National Principals Academy Fellowship with Relay Graduate School of Education in 2017. He is certified by the Tennessee Department of Education in Professional English (7–12) and as a Professional Administrator PreK–12 with a Superintendent endorsement.

While the dual role of Executive Director and Founding Principal is ambitious, it is also intentional and supported by precedent in Tennessee's high-performing charter school sector, where founders such as Lagra Newman of Purpose Preparatory Academy and the co-founders of Valor Collegiate Academies assumed multiple leadership roles to align academic excellence and operational integrity from Day 1. These schools, along with Nashville Classical Charter School and Freedom Preparatory Academy, all launched under founder-led models and have since grown into respected, high-performing networks. Research by Stanford's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) affirms that schools led by strong founders with deep community ties and a clear academic vision often outperform their peers, particularly in the critical start-up phase. National organizations such as the Charter School Growth Fund, one of our funders, and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools also validate the founder-led model, especially when coupled with strong governance and a clear transition plan.

At Novus SMART Academy, although we are not part of a charter management organization (CMO), our leadership and Board of Directors demonstrate this same level of strategy and intentionality. Our diverse, high-capacity Board has been carefully vetted and is receiving training through BES Follow-on Support and BoardOnTrack, with active committees focused on finance, academics, governance, and development to ensure accountability and support. Dr. Sager's dual role is a transitional model designed for the school's early years; as enrollment and financial resources grow, the school will add a School Principal. Dr. Sager will hire an Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, an Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, and an Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, all of whom will begin in Year 0 and receive ongoing training through BES Follow-on Support to ensure sustainable school-based leadership and accountability.

What truly sets Novus SMART Academy (K–8) apart, however, is its origin as a grassroots, community-driven effort. Unlike charter schools currently in Rutherford County School that replicate models developed by CMOs, Novus SMART Academy was shaped through listening sessions, focus groups, and surveys with scholars, families, educators, and community members who provided direct input into every element of the school, from academics and enrichment to culture and engagement. As a result, our school is not just located in the community but built by the community, with families who see themselves reflected in our mission and trust us to fulfill the promise they helped to create.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.4c: Describe the responsibilities of the school's principal or head of school. Detail plans to support and develop this person, and identify the state-approved administrator evaluation model by which this individual will be evaluated pursuant to SBE Rule 0520-02-01 and State Board Policy 5.201.

Responsibilities of the Principal/Head of School. The Principal or Head of School, formally known as the Proposed Executive Director, will serve as the primary instructional leader and the operational manager of the school. Key responsibilities include:

- **Instructional Leadership**
  - Setting and implementing the academic vision aligned with the mission of Novus SMART Academy.
  - Supervising curriculum development and instructional practices to ensure academic excellence.
  - Supporting teachers in meeting individual scholar needs and achieving high standards of learning.
- **Operational Oversight**
  - Managing daily school operations, including scheduling, facilities, and scholar support services.
  - Leading efforts to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment.
  - Ensuring compliance with state, federal, and charter authorizer requirements.
- **Scholar Achievement and Development**
  - Monitoring and evaluating scholar progress using qualitative and quantitative data.
  - Facilitating interventions to address academic or behavioral challenges.
  - Promoting character development and a culture of high expectations for all scholars.
- **Staff Leadership and Development**
  - Hiring, training, and retaining high-quality instructional staff.
- Providing ongoing professional development opportunities for all staff.
- Conducting performance evaluations, offering feedback, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- **Family and Community Engagement**
- Building strong partnerships with families to support scholar success.
- Engaging with the community to promote the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy.
- Overseeing communication efforts to ensure transparency.
- **Strategic and Financial Management**
- Collaborating with the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to align operations with the school's strategic goals.
- Supporting effective resource allocation and budget management.

Plans to Support and Develop the Proposed Executive Director. To ensure the success of the Proposed Executive Director, Novus SMART Academy will implement the following support and development strategies:

- **Mentorship and Coaching**
  - BES Follow-on Support
  - Partnering with experienced school leaders for one-on-one mentorship.
  - Regular coaching sessions to address challenges and refine leadership practices.
- **Professional Development**
  - Participation in state-approved leadership training programs.
  - Access to workshops and conferences on effective school leadership, instructional strategies, and developing a positive school culture.
- **Collaborative Opportunities**
  - Establishing a peer network of charter school leaders for shared learning and best practices.
  - Hosting leadership retreats to focus on long-term planning and team-building.
- **Regular Feedback and Evaluation**
  - Conducting formative check-ins to monitor progress and address areas of growth.
  - Utilizing scholar performance data and staff feedback to inform leadership decisions.

State-Approved Administrator Evaluation Model. An ad hoc Evaluation Committee, consisting of the Board Chair, Board Treasurer, and a representative from the Academics Committee, will conduct an annual review of the Proposed Executive Director. The Evaluation Committee will integrate BoardOnTrack's evidence-based evaluation tool with the TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric to assess the Proposed Executive Director's effectiveness in Instructional Leadership for Continuous Improvement, Culture for Teaching and Learning, Professional Learning and Growth, and Resource Management. This evaluation will also include the collection and analysis of academic performance goals, a self-evaluation, and school culture survey results from scholars, families and staff members. The ad hoc Evaluation Committee will use the evaluation tool to produce a succinct summary of the results to share with the Proposed Executive Director that will strengthen our partnership by ensuring a consistent, high quality evaluation process every year. Board members with educational and leadership backgrounds will lend their expertise in assessing academic and relational competencies, while finance and management experts will evaluate the Proposed Executive Director's operational and fiscal leadership. This

multifaceted evaluation supports the Proposed Executive Director in achieving Novus SMART Academy's goals and upholding accountability to both the Board and community.

Section 2.4d: Explain the plan and timeline to recruit and hire additional key staff, including, but not limited to, operational staff, administrators, and teachers. Identify the leader and decision-maker of this process, and list hiring selection criteria, required experience, and special considerations relevant to the school's design.

Novus SMART Academy's recruitment and hiring strategy aims to ensure the selection of a highly qualified school leader and key staff. The process emphasizes the alignment of candidates with our mission, vision, and core values, with clear timelines, selection criteria, and procedures.

School Leader. The Proposed Executive Director, Dr. Jeremy Sager, will be hired by and report directly to the Board of Directors in July 2025. The Proposed Executive Director is the Board's only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Proposed Executive Director. Furthermore, the Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Proposed Executive Director, the Board will refrain from evaluating any staff other than the Proposed Executive Director, and the Board will use the performance of the school as a primary indicator of the Proposed Executive Director's performance.

Key Staff Hiring Process and Timeline. The Proposed Executive Director will be responsible for the daily administration of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s affairs and will manage and direct all activities of the organization as prescribed by the Board. Post authorization, the timeline for hiring the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will begin in September 2025 with a hire date in January 2026, the timeline for hiring the Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement and Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will begin in January 2026 with a hire date in April 2026. The Proposed Executive Director will have the power to hire and discharge employees of the school and will oversee and direct their activities in carrying out the work of the school.

The Proposed Executive Director will leverage connections with various organizations including but not limited to local colleges/universities with education programs, Teach for America, Nashville Teacher Residency, Relay Graduate School of Education, and BES to recruit high-quality teachers, school leaders, and staff members. The Proposed Executive Director will take the lead in hiring all teachers, school leaders, and staff members for Year 1 of operation and aims to finalize all offers by May 2026 for a full-time start date on July 6, 2026. Figure 53 provides details regarding the start-up plan for staff recruitment.

Figure 53 – Startup Plan and Timeline: Staff

Staff Recruitment				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Draft Year 1 staff handbook.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	In Progress
Review handbook with consultants for revisions and edits.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Design interview process.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Develop detailed talent recruitment plan/strategy.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Create talent recruitment calendar with key recruitment events listed.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Identify talent and recruitment systems and sites to post applications.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Present talent and recruitment systems to Board of Directors for review and approval.	Executive Director	Board of Directors	9/30/2025	Not Started
Board approves staff handbook.	AP of Operations & Finance	Board of Directors	2/27/2026	Not Started
Finalize job descriptions for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital (Required for All Sponsors)				
Post Value Added Propositions on Website and Social Media Platforms	GrowthFuel Marketing in Collaboration with Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Begin recruitment for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Hold Staff Recruitment Informational Fair	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/31/2025	Not Started
Post job description for Years 0-1 FTE staff positions; prioritize Year 0 staff (i.e., AP of Operations and Finance, AP of Scholar Access, AP of School Culture & Community Engagement, and Office Manager).	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Identify interview team of community stakeholders for initial start-up staff interviews.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Create onboarding process.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Not Started
Send referral emails and notifications to our professional networks.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Post job Vacancies and advertise open positions.	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Finalize organizational chart.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Recruit and hire AP of Operations and Finance.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Not Started
Begin hiring process for other Year 0 FTE staff positons (i.e., AP of Scholar Access, AP of School Culture & Community Engagement, and Office Manager).	Executive Director	Executive Director	10/1/2025	Not Started
Hold Recruitment Fair	Executive Director	Board of Directors	10/31/2025	Not Started
Develop leader evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Develop operations team evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
50% of staff receive offer letters.	Executive Director	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Develop new hire welcome letter and packet (includes small swag item, book, etc.).	Executive Director	Executive Director	11/28/2025	Not Started
Complete onboarding with EdTec, or back-office services provider for financial compliance.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Not Started
100% of staff receive offer letters	Executive Director	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started
Develop teacher evaluation rubric and cycle.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	In Progress
Develop teacher coaching structure and protocol.	Executive Director	Executive Director	9/30/2025	Complete
Staff Onboarding				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital (Required for All Sponsors)				
Make an I-9 verification plan.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Research platforms to capture HR paperwork.	Executive Director	Executive Director	12/31/2025	Not Started
Order technology and school swag.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Order staff and student technology.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Prepare benefits Open Enrollment materials.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Build technology training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Build Retirement Plan training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Build Benefits training.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Send staff list to Tech Lab.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Schedule Retirement Plan and Benefits Q/A session.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Not Started
Add all staff to all systems (payroll, retirement, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Add all earnings and deductions in payroll system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Upload teachers to curriculum vendor's roster for staff access.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Confirm all employees have onboarded in payroll system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Send initial onboarding instruction communications.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees Direct Deposit info.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit benefits enrollment status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees 403b status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employee manager assignments.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employees tax profile status.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit I-9 Section 1 completion.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
I-9 Section 2 completion.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Audit employee time off.	Executive Director	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Coordinate tech onboarding plan.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Configure all software accounts for new hires.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Request software login credentials.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	2/27/2026	Not Started
Send onboarding feedback survey to all staff.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Ship reading materials to the new staff.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	6/30/2026	Not Started

Evaluation and Accountability. The Proposed Executive Director will, directly or indirectly, supervise all other staff members employed by the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and is responsible for selecting staff members, conducting staff evaluations, and recommending compensation levels. The Proposed Executive Director will conduct school-based leaders' evaluations using the TEAM Administrator Rubric[92] as a primary indicator of their performance in the areas of (a) Instructional Leadership for Continuous Improvement, (b) Culture for Teaching and Learning, (c) Professional Learning and Growth, and (d) Resource Management[93].

Non-Discrimination. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against candidates or employees on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, disability, or any other protected class in accordance with all applicable laws. All employment will be at will, which will be communicated during the interview process and prior to offers of employment.

Section 2.4e: Describe how recruiting and hiring practices will ensure that the school's leadership team and staff reflect the diversity of the student body and surrounding community.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to recruiting and hiring a leadership team and staff that reflect the diversity of its student body and the broader community it serves. This commitment aligns with the school's mission to produce global achievers at every level of the organization. Our practices will be implemented to ensure compliance with licensure and endorsement requirements.

Staff Recruitment Practices. To create a staff that mirrors our school community, we will post job openings on platforms and networks that emphasize diversity in education, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and national organizations like the National Alliance of Black School Educators, Latinos for Education, and Teach for America alumni networks. We will also target local community centers, faith-based organizations, and minority-led professional associations.

We will also practice blind resume screening to minimize bias in the initial application review. The proposed Executive Director will collaborate with hired school leaders to develop interview questions that will assess candidates' experience working with diverse populations and their alignment with Novus SMART Academy's mission. We will intentionally Include multiple perspectives on hiring panels, incorporating voices from the Founding Board, parents, and community members.

Proactive Recruitment. We will maintain a robust pipeline of potential candidates by actively recruiting year-round through partnerships with universities and teacher preparation programs and networking with professional organizations and job fairs. We will Identify high-potential staff members for leadership roles and provide training to prepare them for succession. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate to develop a talent pool to ensure continuity in leadership and instruction during transitions.

Representation Goals and Accountability. To ensure progress toward building a staff that reflects the community, we will set annual recruitment goals for staff diversity based on the demographics of the student body and community. The Proposed Executive Director will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to regularly analyze recruitment, hiring, and retention data to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. The Proposed Executive Director will report staff diversity metrics to the Founding Board quarterly and include updates in the annual report to our community stakeholders.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.4f: Explain how the school will ensure teachers are licensed and endorsed in their content areas, as required in SBE Rule 0520-02-03-.01, and identify the staff member responsible for overseeing licensure compliance.

To ensure compliance with Tennessee State Board of Education Rule 0520-02-03-.01 regarding licensure and endorsement requirements, Novus SMART Academy will maintain a rigorous system for verifying and monitoring staff credentials. All teaching staff will be required to hold active Tennessee teaching licenses with the appropriate grade-level and subject endorsements, ensuring they are fully qualified to deliver high-quality instruction. Non-instructional staff will meet the relevant qualifications as outlined by state guidelines for their specific roles.

The Proposed Executive Director, supported by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will be responsible for overseeing licensure compliance. This oversight will include the following measures:

- **Credential Verification During Hiring**: Licenses and endorsements will be thoroughly reviewed as part of the hiring process to ensure alignment with state regulations and the school's instructional needs.
- **Ongoing Monitoring System**: The school will establish a system to track licensure renewal dates and changes in endorsement requirements, ensuring continuous compliance.
- **Support for Staff Development**: Teachers will be supported in obtaining additional endorsements or renewing existing licenses through professional development opportunities, guidance on licensure pathways, and financial support if necessary.

By implementing these measures, Novus SMART Academy will ensure that all staff meet or exceed state licensure requirements, supporting the delivery of exceptional education to all scholars.

Section 2.4g: Describe the policies and procedures for staff evaluation and providing feedback and identify the school's state-approved evaluation model for teachers, as required by SBE Rule 0520-02-01 and State Board Policy 5.201.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to fostering a culture of continuous professional growth, high performance, and accountability for school leadership and staff. To achieve this, we will implement a comprehensive plan that supports teacher and staff development and ensures annual evaluations to align with the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) rubric, as mandated by State Board of Education (SBE) rules. Documentation of all licensed staff evaluations will be maintained for compliance and future reference in TNCompass.

Summer Professional Learning and Development. All staff will participate in our annual summer professional learning and development to understand the school's mission, vision, and expectations during the onboarding process. This onboarding process includes an introduction to the TEAM rubric, professional learning and development frameworks, and data-driven performance standards.

Evaluation Process Using the TEAM Rubric. The TEAM rubric will be the foundation for evaluations to assess performance in the following domains: Instructional Leadership for Continuous Improvement (Leaders), Culture for Teaching and Learning, Professional Learning and Growth, Resource Management, Planning, Instruction, and Assessment (Teachers). The Proposed Executive Director will conduct evaluations for all school leaders and Licensed Teachers, Teachers-in-Residence, and related arts teachers with a minimum of four observations (two announced, two unannounced) per year in Year 1. Assistant Principal of Scholar Access will conduct evaluations for all special education teachers and ESL teachers. These evaluations include formal observations, self-assessments, feedback sessions, performance data reviews, instructional artifact reviews, and student growth data analysis tied to school-wide goals. Quarterly check-ins will be conducted to review progress on leadership goals and adjust improvement plans as necessary. Summative evaluations will synthesize observational data, student growth measures, and self-assessments. All ratings will be categorized as Significantly Above Expectations, Above Expectations, At Expectations, or Below Expectations based on TEAM rubric guidelines.

Professional Learning and Development Opportunities: All school leaders will participate in leadership development sessions that are led by the Proposed Executive Director with BES Follow-on Support, focusing on instructional leadership, organizational management, and resource allocation. All teachers and staff will receive ongoing professional learning and development tailored to instructional best practices, data analysis, and other key focus areas based on school wide needs. Individual growth plans (IGPs) will be developed for each staff member based on prior evaluations and identified needs. We will pair early-career teachers and newly hired staff with
experienced mentors, and provide leaders and teachers with regular coaching cycles, including classroom observations, feedback sessions, and action steps to improve practice. We will also equip staff with instructional resources, technology, and tools necessary to succeed in their roles.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Collaborative Culture. Weekly grade-level and content-specific planning sessions will allow staff to share best practices and collaboratively address challenges. Leadership will use assessment data to tailor professional learning sessions, ensuring alignment with school-wide goals.

Leadership and Staff Development. We will conduct weekly data meetings to analyze student performance, set instructional goals, and adjust strategies. We will also facilitate weekly grade-level and content-specific collaborative planning sessions to engage staff in reflective discussions to share best practices and challenges. The school leadership team will also use assessment data to tailor professional learning and development sessions to address specific gaps in achievement. These practices will also help us to identify and nurture high-potential staff for future leadership roles. The Proposed Executive Director will provide leadership staff with opportunities to develop skills in strategic planning, team management, and decision-making through shadowing and workshops.

Continuous Improvement and Accountability. We will provide leaders and staff with actionable feedback after every observation and evaluation cycle and implement mid-year reviews to adjust goals and strategies as needed. We will celebrate high-performing staff using evaluation data to identify and reward best practices that align with the school's mission with ongoing recognition programs and leadership opportunities. Staff rated Below Expectations will receive an improvement plan with specific action steps, additional coaching, and support resources. Staff failing to meet expectations after remediation may face non-renewal in accordance with school policy and state regulations.

Novus SMART Academy will prioritize fostering a culture of accountability, growth, and support for all staff. However, when performance does not meet expectations, we will implement a structured process to address deficiencies and, if necessary, take appropriate steps to ensure the continued success of our school and scholars.

Building a Culture of Growth and Stability. Novus SMART Academy will prioritize fostering a supportive and accountable culture that values professional growth, continuous improvement, and long-term commitment. With clear systems for development, evaluation, and addressing underperformance, we will ensure that every staff member contributes to achieving our mission of preparing global achievers who embody strong character and relentless ambition.

Actionable Feedback and Improvement Plans. Staff will receive actionable feedback after every observation and evaluation cycle to address specific areas for improvement. Those rated Below Expectations will be placed on a formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) that includes:

- Clearly defined and measurable objectives.
- Targeted professional development and mentoring opportunities.
- Coaching sessions and biweekly progress reviews to monitor growth.
- Staff showing significant improvement will return to regular performance monitoring. Those failing to meet benchmarks may face non-renewal or termination in alignment with school policy and state regulations.

Managing Turnover. Novus SMART Academy recognizes the importance of staff retention and will implement strategies to minimize turnover.

- **Recognition and Rewards:** High-performing staff will be celebrated through recognition programs, leadership opportunities, and performance-based incentives.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Leaders will assess workloads and provide support to prevent burnout, promoting a positive and sustainable work environment.
- **Exit Interviews:** Exit interviews will identify trends and address root causes of turnover to improve retention strategies.
- **Talent Pipelines:** A proactive approach to recruitment will include maintaining a pool of qualified candidates and partnering with local universities to attract top talent.

Escalation Process. Staff who show significant progress during the Improvement Plan period will return to regular performance monitoring. Those who fail to meet improvement benchmarks will receive a final evaluation and may face non-renewal or termination in accordance with school policy and state regulations.

Termination Procedures. All termination decisions will comply with Novus SMART Academy's personnel policies, Tennessee Department of Education regulations, and at-will employment laws. Documentation from observations, evaluations, and improvement plans will serve as the basis for termination decisions. Staff members who fail to meet expectations after remediation will be informed of non-renewal at the end of the school year. Non-renewal decisions will be communicated in a professional, timely manner to ensure transparency and clarity. In cases of severe misconduct or violations of school policies, immediate termination may occur following an investigation and due process.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.4h: Explain the school's strategy to retain high-performing teachers. Outline the school's proposed salary ranges, employment benefits, and any incentive structures. Compare the salary ranges to the resident district and explain how they are sufficient to recruit teachers.

Commitment to Excellence. Novus SMART Academy recognizes that while no salary can fully reflect the dedication of our educators, we strive to ensure fair and competitive compensation. With our Board of Directors working to secure additional revenue through a Fund Development Plan, we will continue to enhance salaries, benefits, and incentives to honor the critical work our staff does in transforming the lives of our scholars and their families.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will also recruit and retain high-performing teachers to cement our reputation in the community as an agency of change. Our goal is to remain among the top 5% of top-performing schools in Tennessee and will be known as the top charter school option for scholars and families in Rutherford County. We will be known as the best place to work for teachers, school leaders, and staff members, and we will have a positive reputation for creating a safe, fun, and engaging learning environment for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members.

We will not only focus on what it takes to enroll and retain scholars and families but also on hiring, investing in, and retaining high-quality teachers, school leaders, and staff members who want to serve in an extraordinary school environment that strives to do what is best for all stakeholders. We also envision our school leading the way by providing teachers, school leaders, and staff members with on-campus social-emotional learning and support through community circles, emotional resilience training and development, collaborative problem-solving, and with access to a campus-based licensed therapist at full scale. We want to create a positive working environment with psychological safety for our entire school community, which will support in retaining our high-performing staff.

Base Salaries and Pay. Novus SMART Academy understands that attracting and retaining high-performing teachers and school leaders is essential to achieving our mission. The minimum qualification for all teachers will be a Bachelor's degree, and instructional-based leadership staff must hold a master's degree with administrative licensure. Our compensation packages and benefits are designed to be competitive with Rutherford County Schools and the local charter schools while acknowledging the unique structure of our school model and the invaluable contributions of our staff. Proposed base salaries for Year 1 positions are included in Figure 54.

Figure 54 – Proposed Based Salaries with Descriptions and Requirements

Role	Descriptions & Requirements
Teacher in Residence	• Base Salary: $45,000 • 2% annual increase. • Aspirations to become a licensed teacher. • Will transition to the teacher salary scale once fully licensed. According to Salary.com, the average annual salary for an Educational Assistant in Tennessee is $29,009. According to Indeed.com, the average annual salary for an Educational Assistant in Tennessee is $26,104. Considering that a Teacher in Residence is a non-licensed position with responsibilities exceeding those of a traditional Educational Assistant, it is appropriate to set the salary between the typical earnings of an Educational Assistant and a Licensed Teacher. A competitive annual salary range for a Teacher in Residence in Rutherford County, Tennessee is $35,000 to $40,000. This range acknowledges the Teacher in Residence's commitment to professional learning and development, and the added responsibilities compared to standard Educational Assistants.

Licensed Teacher	• Base Salaries
	  ○ Bachelor: $55,000
	  ○ Master: $59,000
	  ○ Education Specialist: $63,000
	  ○ Doctorate: $67,000
	• 2% annual increase.
	• Joins the team with 2-3 years of measurable data showing scholar gains (acceptable forms include TVAAS, state assessments (TNReady), or national normed assessment data).
	• Eligible to apply for grade level leader.
	
	According to Indeed, the average annual salary for Licensed Teachers in Rutherford County Schools is $53,415. According to the Tennessee State Government, the base salary for a

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital (Required for All Sponsors)	
	Licensed Teacher with a Bachelor's degree and zero years of experience in Tennessee is $40,000. According to Rutherford County Schools' Certified Pay Schedule for the 2024-2025 school year, Licensed Teacher base salaries are as follows: • Bachelor: $48,355.91 • Master: $52,466.16 • Master +45: $56,925.79 • Education Specialist: $59,772.08 • Doctorate: $62,760.68 **Competitive Edge.** Our salary schedule ensures competitive compensation for teachers by exceeding local and state averages. While the base salary for licensed teachers in Tennessee starts at $40,000, and Rutherford County Schools offer a range beginning at $48,355.91 for a Bachelor's degree, our starting salary of $55,000 for Bachelor's degree holders surpasses both benchmarks. Similarly, our salaries for advanced degrees (Master's: $59,000, Education Specialist: $63,000, Doctorate: $67,000) are designed to attract and retain highly-qualified educators by offering compensation above Rutherford County's certified pay schedule for the 2024-2025 school year.

School Counselor	• Base Salary
	  ○ Master: $60,000
	  ○ Education Specialist: $64,000
	  ○ Doctorate: $68,000
	• 2% annual increase.
	• 2-3 years of measurable data showing scholar gains (acceptable forms include TVAAS, state assessments (TNReady), or national normed assessment data).

Assistant Principal	• Base Salary
	  ○ Master: $75,000
	  ○ Education Specialist: $79,000
	  ○ Doctorate: $83,000
	• 2% annual increase.
	• Must have admin certification.
	• 2-3 years of measurable data showing scholar gains (acceptable forms include TVAAS, state assessments (TNReady), or national normed assessment data).

Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance	• Base Salary
	  ○ Master: $78,000
	  ○ Education Specialist: $82,000
	  ○ Doctorate: $86,000
	• 2% annual increase.

Proposed Executive Director & School Principal	• Base Salary
	  ○ Master: $100,000
	  ○ Education Specialist: $104,000
	  ○ Doctorate: $108,000
	• 2% annual increase.
	• Must have admin certification.
	• 2-3 years of measurable data showing scholar gains (acceptable forms include TVAAS, state assessments (TNReady), or national normed assessment data).

Office Manager	• Base Salary: $45,000 • 2% annual increase.
Office Secretary	• Base Salary: $35,000 • 2% annual increase.
School Resource Officer	• Base Salary: $75,000 • No annual increase.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital (Required for All Sponsors)	
Part-time After School Program Staff & Summer School Staff	Part-time After School Program Staff • Base Pay: $20 per hour • No annual increase. Summer School Staff • Licensed Teacher Base Pay: $25 per hour • Teacher-in-Residence Base Pay: $15 per hour • No annual increase.
Performance-based Incentives	Our expenditures include performance-based incentives designed to recruit and retain high-quality teachers and staff as follows: <up to $3,000> EOY Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 3 with Grade 3. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with "Met Expectations" or "Exceeded Expectations" performance levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $600 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,800); $1,800 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $300 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $900). $900 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with Level 3 (evidence that the students made growth as expected), Level 4 (moderate evidence that the students made more growth than expected), and/or Level 5 (significant evidence that the students made more growth than expected) effectiveness levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $400 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,200). $1,200 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $200 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $600). $600 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. <up to $3,000> English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21): • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with a qualifying score for exit of 4 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening. • Assumes $1,800 for Licensed ESL Teachers with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $900 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet/exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with the following scores: only one 2 and/or two or more scores of 3 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening; an overall proficiency level of Progressing. • Assumes $1,200 for Licensed ESL Teacher with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $600 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5.

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

<up to $2,500> EOY NWEA MAP Assessments

- 95% Teacher Attendance Rate
- TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above.
- Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1.

Achievement (shows how scholars are performing compared to their current grade-level peers): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected RIT Score as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science.

- Licensed Teachers: Assumes $375 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,500). $1,500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5.
- Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $187.50 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $750). $750 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5.

Growth (shows how much growth scholars have experienced since the previous assessments, regardless of whether they are performing at grade level or not): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected Growth as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science.

- Licensed Teachers: Assumes $250 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,000). $1,000 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5.
- Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $125 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $500). $500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5.

< $1500> Retention Bonus with 95% Attendance Rate to be paid annually in October of the upcoming school year. Assumes 5.0 FTE Founding Staff Members to be paid in October Year 1 for Year 0 returners; 30.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 2 for Year 1 returners; 43.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 3 for Year 2 returners; 68.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 4 for Year 3 returners; and 78.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 5 for Year 4 returners.

Compensation Structure. Our salary pay scales consider the level of education, years of service, and licensure requirements for all staff. Outlined in Figures 55-58, our proposed salary pay scales ensure that our pay aligns with or exceeds local district charter schools standards. These pay scales include an annual 2% increase to recognize years of service and incentivize long-term retention.

Figure 55 – Licensed Teachers and Teachers-in-Residence Salary Pay Scale

LICENSED TEACHERS & TEACHERS IN RESIDENCE SALARY PAY SCALE					
Degree →	Bachelors	Masters	Educational Specialist	Doctorate	Teacher in Residence
Step 0	$55,000.00	$59,000.00	$63,000.00	$67,000.00	$45,000.00
1	$56,100.00	$60,180.00	$64,260.00	$68,340.00	$45,900.00
2	$57,222.00	$61,383.60	$65,545.20	$69,706.80	$46,818.00
3	$58,366.44	$62,611.27	$66,856.10	$71,100.94	$47,754.36
4	$59,533.77	$63,863.50	$68,193.23	$72,522.95	$48,709.45

5	$60,724.44	$65,140.77	$69,557.09	$73,973.41	$49,683.64
6	$61,938.93	$66,443.58	$70,948.23	$75,452.88	$50,677.31
7	$63,177.71	$67,772.45	$72,367.20	$76,961.94	$51,690.86
8	$64,441.27	$69,127.90	$73,814.54	$78,501.18	$52,724.67
9	$65,730.09	$70,510.46	$75,290.83	$80,071.20	$53,779.17
10	$67,044.69	$71,920.67	$76,796.65	$81,672.63	$54,854.75
11	$68,385.59	$73,359.08	$78,332.58	$83,306.08	$55,951.84
12	$69,753.30	$74,826.27	$79,899.23	$84,972.20	$57,070.88
13	$71,148.36	$76,322.79	$81,497.22	$86,671.64	$58,212.30
14	$72,571.33	$77,849.25	$83,127.16	$88,405.08	$59,376.54
15	$74,022.76	$79,406.23	$84,789.71	$90,173.18	$60,564.08
16	$75,503.21	$80,994.36	$86,485.50	$91,976.64	$61,775.36
17	$77,013.28	$82,614.24	$88,215.21	$93,816.18	$63,010.86
18	$78,553.54	$84,266.53	$89,979.51	$95,692.50	$64,271.08
19	$80,124.61	$85,951.86	$91,779.10	$97,606.35	$65,556.50
20	$81,727.11	$87,670.90	$93,614.69	$99,558.48	$66,867.63

Figure 56 – School Counselors/Coordinators and Coaches Pay Scale

SCHOOL COUNSELORS/COORDINATORS & COACHES SALARY PAY SCALE			
Degree →	Masters	Educational Specialist	Doctorate
Step 0	$60,000.00	$64,000.00	$68,000.00
1	$61,200.00	$65,280.00	$69,360.00
2	$62,424.00	$66,585.60	$70,747.20
3	$63,672.48	$67,917.31	$72,162.14
4	$64,945.93	$69,275.66	$73,605.39
5	$66,244.85	$70,661.17	$75,077.49
6	$67,569.75	$72,074.39	$76,579.04
7	$68,921.14	$73,515.88	$78,110.63
8	$70,299.56	$74,986.20	$79,672.84

9	$71,705.55	$76,485.92	$81,266.29
10	$73,139.67	$78,015.64	$82,891.62
11	$74,602.46	$79,575.96	$84,549.45
12	$76,094.51	$81,167.47	$86,240.44
13	$77,616.40	$82,790.82	$87,965.25
14	$79,168.73	$84,446.64	$89,724.56
15	$80,752.10	$86,135.57	$91,519.05
16	$82,367.14	$87,858.29	$93,349.43
17	$84,014.49	$89,615.45	$95,216.42
18	$85,694.77	$91,407.76	$97,120.74
19	$87,408.67	$93,235.92	$99,063.16
20	$89,156.84	$95,100.63	$101,044.42

Figure 57 – Principal and Assistant Principal Salary Pay Scale

PRINCIPAL SALARY PAY SCALE (Admin Certification)				ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SALARY PAY SCALE (Admin Certification)				ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OF OPERATIONS & FINANCE SALARY PAY SCALE			
Degree →	Masters	Educational Specialist	Doctorate	Degree →	Masters	Educational Specialist	Doctorate	Degree →	Masters	Educational Specialist	Doctorate
Step 0	$100,000.00	$104,000.00	$108,000.00	Step 0	$75,000.00	$79,000.00	$83,000.00	Step 0	$78,000.00	$82,000.00	$86,000.00
1	$102,000.00	$106,080.00	$110,160.00	1	$76,500.00	$80,580.00	$84,660.00	1	$79,560.00	$83,640.00	$87,720.00
2	$104,040.00	$108,201.60	$112,363.20	2	$78,030.00	$82,191.60	$86,353.20	2	$81,151.20	$85,312.80	$89,474.40
3	$106,120.80	$110,365.63	$114,610.46	3	$79,590.60	$83,835.43	$88,080.26	3	$82,774.22	$87,019.06	$91,263.89
4	$108,243.22	$112,572.94	$116,902.67	4	$81,182.41	$85,512.14	$89,841.87	4	$84,429.71	$88,759.44	$93,089.17
5	$110,408.08	$114,824.40	$119,240.73	5	$82,806.06	$87,222.38	$91,638.71	5	$86,118.30	$90,534.63	$94,950.95
6	$112,616.24	$117,120.89	$121,625.54	6	$84,462.18	$88,966.83	$93,471.48	6	$87,840.67	$92,345.32	$96,849.97
7	$114,868.57	$119,463.31	$124,058.05	7	$86,151.43	$90,746.17	$95,340.91	7	$89,597.48	$94,192.22	$98,786.97
8	$117,165.94	$121,852.58	$126,539.21	8	$87,874.45	$92,561.09	$97,247.73	8	$91,389.43	$96,076.07	$100,762.71
9	$119,509.26	$124,289.63	$129,070.00	9	$89,631.94	$94,412.31	$99,192.68	9	$93,217.22	$97,997.59	$102,777.96
10	$121,899.44	$126,775.42	$131,651.40	10	$91,424.58	$96,300.56	$101,176.54	10	$95,081.56	$99,957.54	$104,833.52
11	$124,337.43	$129,310.93	$134,284.43	11	$93,253.07	$98,226.57	$103,200.07	11	$96,983.20	$101,956.69	$106,930.19
12	$126,824.18	$131,897.15	$136,970.11	12	$95,118.13	$100,191.10	$105,264.07	12	$98,922.86	$103,995.83	$109,068.79

13	$129,360.66	$134,535.09	$139,709.52	13	$97,020.50	$102,194.92	$107,369.35	13	$100,901.32	$106,075.74	$111,250.17
14	$131,947.88	$137,225.79	$142,503.71	14	$98,960.91	$104,238.82	$109,516.74	14	$102,919.34	$108,197.26	$113,475.17
15	$134,586.83	$139,970.31	$145,353.78	15	$100,940.13	$106,323.60	$111,707.07	15	$104,977.73	$110,361.20	$115,744.68
16	$137,278.57	$142,769.71	$148,260.86	16	$102,958.93	$108,450.07	$113,941.21	16	$107,077.28	$112,568.43	$118,059.57
17	$140,024.14	$145,625.11	$151,226.07	17	$105,018.11	$110,619.07	$116,220.04	17	$109,218.83	$114,819.80	$120,420.76
18	$142,824.62	$148,537.61	$154,250.59	18	$107,118.47	$112,831.45	$118,544.44	18	$111,403.21	$117,116.19	$122,829.18
19	$145,681.12	$151,508.36	$157,335.61	19	$109,260.84	$115,088.08	$120,915.33	19	$113,631.27	$119,458.52	$125,285.76
20	$148,594.74	$154,538.53	$160,482.32	20	$111,446.05	$117,389.84	$123,333.63	20	$115,903.90	$121,847.69	$127,791.48

Figure 58 – Support Staff Salary Pay Scale

SUPPORT STAFF SALARY PAY SCALE		
Role →	Office Manager	Office Secretary
Step 0	$45,000.00	$35,000.00
1	$45,900.00	$35,700.00
2	$46,818.00	$36,414.00
3	$47,754.36	$37,142.28
4	$48,709.45	$37,885.13
5	$49,683.64	$38,642.83
6	$50,677.31	$39,415.68
7	$51,690.86	$40,204.00
8	$52,724.67	$41,008.08
9	$53,779.17	$41,828.24
10	$54,854.75	$42,664.80
11	$55,951.84	$43,518.10
12	$57,070.88	$44,388.46
13	$58,212.30	$45,276.23
14	$59,376.54	$46,181.76
15	$60,564.08	$47,105.39
16	$61,775.36	$48,047.50

Section 2.4 - Personnel / Human Capital
(Required for All Sponsors)

17	$63,010.86	$49,008.45
18	$64,271.08	$49,988.62
19	$65,556.50	$50,988.39
20	$66,867.63	$52,008.16

Employment Benefits. Novus SMART Academy offers a comprehensive benefits package to ensure our staff feel valued and supported both professionally and personally to include medical, dental, and vision insurance. Our goal is to provide competitive plan options comparable to those provided by Rutherford County Schools, tailored to meet the diverse needs of our staff and their families. We will also participate in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) and provide additional retirement plan options aligned with our authorizing district.

Professional Learning and Development with Retention Efforts. We are committed to investing in our staff's professional growth and creating pathways for advancement. Our staffing model has clear pathways for teachers to transition into leadership roles within the school structure. We will provide professional learning and development support towards obtaining advanced degrees and endorsements through partnerships with local universities and education organizations. We also understand that securing additional funds through grants and private donations will allow for ongoing salary pay scale review to maintain competitiveness, enhanced professional learning offerings, and financial support for advanced certifications and degrees.

The Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement will also intentionally develop strong partnerships with local and national organizations that will provide training on engaging diverse learners and families effectively. As we develop over time, we will establish mentorship programs to support new hires, particularly educators from underrepresented groups, and we will promote leadership development opportunities to ensure staff have pathways to grow within the organization. As a standard practice, we will also regularly evaluate compensation structures. We will always celebrate the contributions of all staff through recognition programs that highlight their contributions to our school.

Retention Strategies. We will celebrate and reward high-performing staff through recognition programs to highlight exemplary practices in team meetings, newsletters, and community events. We will also provide leadership opportunities for outstanding performance. We will also provide ongoing support for professional growth, ensuring that staff feel valued and invested in their career development. To support transitions and maintain the integrity of our instructional program, we will cross-train leadership staff and support staff to ensure staff can step into critical roles temporarily during turnover. Most importantly, we will communicate transparently with families and the community about leadership or teacher transitions to maintain trust and confidence.

Section 2.4i: Complete Table 5: Staffing FTE Counts with staffing projections. Modify or include additional positions to accommodate different school models.

See Table 5 on the next page.

Table 5: Staffing FTE Counts (Required for All Sponsors)						
NOTE: All positions are not required and/or may not apply to a charter school.	Year of Operation					
Position	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Principal(s)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Supervisor / Director						
Internal Audit Personnel						
Classroom Teachers (core subjects)	0.0	8.0	12.0	16.0	20.0	24.0
Classroom Teachers (electives, world languages)	0.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.0
Special Education Teachers	0.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers	0.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	6.0
Other Teachers	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Office Manager	0.25	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Computer Programmer(s)						
Data Processing Personnel						
Purchasing Personnel						
School Counselor(s)	0.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Psychological Personnel						
Homebound Teachers						
Librarian(s)						
Social Workers						
Medical Personnel						
Material Supervisor(s)						
Assessment Personnel						
Audiovisual Personnel						
Education Media Personnel						
Instructional Computer Personnel						
Assistant Principal(s)	1.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Mechanic(s)						
Bus Drivers						
Guards						
Office Secretary(s)	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Clerical Personnel						
Teachers-in-Residence	0.0	9.0	13.0	17.0	21.0	25.0
Attendants						
Cafeteria Personnel						
Custodial Personnel						
Maintenance Personnel						
Part-time After School Program Staff & Summer School Staff	0.0	1.0	2.0	6.0	7.0	7.0
School Resource Officer	0.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Speech Pathologist						
Certified Substitute Teachers						
Non-certified Substitute Teachers						
Total FTEs	**2.25**	**31.5**	**45.0**	**63.0**	**75.0**	**85.0**

Section 2.5 - Professional Development
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.5a: Describe the expected number of days and hours for professional development throughout the school year and explain how the proposed school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure support this plan. Include time scheduled for collaborative planning and how such time will typically be used.

Professional Learning and Development. To foster continuous growth and excellence among teachers, staff members, and school leaders, Novus SMART Academy will dedicate 17 full days (136 hours) per school year for professional learning and development (PLD) in the summer and 4 additional full days (32 hours) of PLD throughout the school year. This schedule supports our mission to ensure that every scholar receives high-quality instruction, meets high behavioral standards, and thrives in a safe and sustainable operational environment with 21 full days (168 hours) set aside annually for PLD.

School Calendar, Daily Schedule, and Staffing Structure Alignment. The school calendar is also specifically designed to support our commitment to ongoing professional development. Wednesday early release days are incorporated into the academic calendar, providing teachers with an additional 28 days (56 hours) for focused PLD related to school culture and operations and collaborative content planning without disrupting classroom instructional time. This will allow for reflection, data-driven adjustments, and targeted training based on evolving needs. As an additional layer of support, teachers will also engage in 32 days (32 hours) of ongoing 1:1 PLD coaching sessions based on their individual needs (see Figure 59).

Figure 59 - Types of Professional Learning and Development

<table>
<tr><th>Types of PLD</th><th>Number of PLD Days and Hours</th></tr>
<tr><td>Full Day PLD Sessions
All staff members will engage in 17 days of summer PLD before the start of the new school year. PLD topics will include policies, procedures, schoolwide culture systems, instructional models, and family engagement strategies.
All staff members will also engage in 6 additional days of intensive PLD during the school year. These PLD topics will also include policies, procedures, schoolwide culture systems, instructional models, and family engagement strategies.
Please Note: We will also facilitate Parent-Teacher Conferences on October 12th and March 15th for a larger portion of the day.</td><td><table><tr><th>Days</th><th>Hours</th></tr><tr><td>July 6-24 (15 days)</td><td>120</td></tr><tr><td>July 27 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>July 31 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>September 4 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>October 12 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>January 4-5 (2 days)</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>February 15 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>March 15 (1 day)</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Total: 23 days</td><td>Total: 184 hours</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Wednesday PLD Sessions. All staff members will engage in 28 days of ongoing PLD on Wednesdays after school for 2 hours as follows:

2:00-3:00: School Culture and Operations: We will use this time to address any school culture and operations successes and challenges impacting the learning environment, ensuring solutions are integrated into everyday routines.

3:00-4:00: Collaborative Planning
Collaborative planning is an integral component of ensuring the success of our two-educator-per-classroom model. Our daily schedule allows for weekly collaborative planning time between</td><td><table><tr><th>Days</th><th>Hours</th></tr><tr><td>August 5th, 12th, 26th</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>September 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th</td><td>8</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

Section 2.5 - Professional Development
(Required for All Sponsors)

General Education Teachers and Teachers in Residence with the instructional coach (Attachment B).

- During collaborative planning, we will engage using the following frameworks:
  - Weekly Planning Meetings
  - Weekly Data Meetings
  - Reteaching Structures

October 14th, 28th	4
November 4th	2
December 2nd, 9th	4
January 6th, 13th, 27th	6
February 3rd, 10th, 24th	6
March 3rd, 24th, 31st	6
April 7th, 14th, 28th	6
May 5th, 12th, 26th	6
Total: 27 days	Total: 56

1:1 PLD Coaching Sessions. All instructional staff will engage in 32 days of ongoing 1:1 PLD Coaching Sessions based on their individual needs.

Weeks	Hours
August 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st	4
September 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th	4
October 12th, 19th, 26th	3
November 2nd, 9th, 16th, 30th	4
December 7th, 14th	2
January 11th, 18th, 25th	3
February 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd	4
March 15th, 22nd, 29th	3
April 5th, 26th	2

May 3rd, 10th, 17th	3
Total: 32 weeks	Total: 32

Section 2.5b: Describe the core components of a professional development plan and detail how those components will support effective implementation of the academic plan. Address the areas of special education and English learners, including implementation of individualized educational plans (IEPs) and individualized learning plans (ILPs), discipline of students with disabilities, and communication with EL families.

See Figure 60 to review the core components of our professional development plan.

Figure 60 - Core Components of Professional Learning and Development

Core Components of Professional Learning and Development	
Academics	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Assessments Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Rigor Trajectory Practice Clinics Weekly Planning Meetings Weekly Data Meetings Reteach Structures	**Assessments.** In Year 1, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, in partnership with the Proposed Executive Director, will provide professional learning and development on how all schoolwide assessments will be delivered throughout the school year (Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and Data and Assessments Coordinator at Full Scale). There will be before, during, and after assessments protocols for all teachers, school leaders, and staff members to follow so that our test environments are not compromised by ineffective or immoral practices. Scholars will participate in all school wide assessments in their assigned testing groups, based on any testing accommodations or modifications that must be offered as outlined in scholars' IEP, ILP, and/or 504 Plans. **Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Rigor Trajectory.** Teachers and school leaders will participate in weekly coaching cycles for continuous improvement of their instructional practices in the classroom. Teachers will receive feedback using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for rigor. General Education Teachers, Teachers in Residence, and Related Arts Teachers will receive live coaching from their instructional coaches (Proposed Executive Director in Year 1; Assistant Principals and Instructional Coaches at Full Scale). Live coaching is when the instructional coach gives feedback to the teacher to implement in the moment to push instructional practices. This may also include the instructional coach modeling a strategy with scholars during class for the teacher. All teachers will meet 1:1 with their instructional coach each week to discuss observation feedback, practice strategies and upcoming lessons, and check-in on professional development goals. At full scale, Assistant Principals, Instructional Coaches, and Culture Coaches split the coaching load of teachers. Each grade band of school leaders will be coached by the School Principal and will participate in a weekly leadership team meeting to discuss goals for the school and individual leadership goals. **Practice Clinics.** Throughout the school year, teachers and school leaders will engage in regular practice of academic techniques within a defined feedback protocol. Teachers may be expected to deliver portions of an upcoming lesson, receive feedback from their colleagues, and implement the feedback in the moment to improve their practice as follows: (1) Teach a lesson segment with colleagues present. (2) Receive feedback from colleagues. (3) Implement feedback from colleagues. (3) Develop clear next steps to improve future instruction.

Section 2.5 - Professional Development (Required for All Sponsors)	
	Weekly Data Meetings. Teachers and school leaders will collect and analyze scholar work and assessments to determine next steps for Tiered intervention support in the general education classroom and for MTSS-Academics. **Reteach Structures.** After collecting and analyzing scholars' work and assessments, teachers and school leaders will develop reteaching structures to support student learning in the general education classroom, using one of the following structured strategies: Activating Prior Knowledge, Academic Monitoring, Modeling, and/or Guided Discourse.
Special Populations • Scholars with Disabilities • English Language Learners • Gifted Scholars • Scholars w 504 Plans • Scholars At-Risk	*The professional development plan for Novus SMART Academy is designed to support effective implementation of our academic plan and to align with Tennessee Department of Education standards, focusing on the diverse needs of our scholars. This structured framework centers on comprehensive, targeted training that equips teachers and school leaders with the skills necessary to meet the needs of Scholars with Disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL), Gifted Scholars, Scholars with 504 Plans, and At-Risk Scholars. Each training component is crafted to foster an inclusive classroom environment, enhance family communication, and build collaborative partnerships that drive scholar success.* *To support these goals, the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, in partnership with experienced Special Education Teachers and/or ESL Teachers, will lead professional learning and development for educators, focusing on supporting scholars in special populations within the general education classroom. In alignment with our commitment to inclusion, educators will be trained to provide appropriate accommodations and modifications that enable all scholars to thrive academically and make progress toward schoolwide goals. This professional development plan ensures that every scholar, regardless of background or need, has access to a high-quality, supportive education.* ***Scholars with Disabilities*** • ***Policy and Procedural Knowledge:*** *Training will begin with a thorough review of policies and procedural safeguards to support scholars and families.* • ***Identification Process****: Educators will learn procedures to identify scholars who may qualify for special education services, ensuring timely intervention.* • ***IEP Anatomy and Application****: Educators will receive training on the components of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), with opportunities to review and apply real examples.* • ***Lesson Planning Integration****: Teachers will collaborate with special education instructors to embed learning goals, accommodations, and modifications as per each scholar's IEP.* • ***Mock IEP Meetings****: Role-play scenarios will allow educators to experience the dynamics of an IEP meeting, focusing on collaborative goal-setting with families and service providers.* • ***Ongoing Review of IEP At-a-Glance****: Continuous access to simplified IEP summaries will ensure teachers consistently address each scholar's unique goals.* • ***Family Engagement****: Training will also include strategies for building trust and communicating effectively with families of scholars with disabilities.* ***English Language Learners (ELL)*** • ***Policy and Identification Procedures:*** *Educators will be trained on policies supporting ELL scholars and on processes for identifying those who may require ELL services.* • ***ILP Structure and Review****: Educators will study the anatomy of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) and participate in case reviews to ensure familiarity.* • ***Lesson Planning with ESL Instructors****: Teachers will work alongside ESL specialists to incorporate reading, writing, speaking, and listening objectives in line with scholars' ILPs.* • ***Mock ILP Meetings****: Similar to IEP sessions, mock ILP meetings will prepare teachers for collaborative planning with families and service providers.*

- ***ILP At-a-Glance****: Ongoing ILP reviews will keep educators aligned with scholars' linguistic and academic needs.*
- ***Communication with Families****: Training will include effective communication techniques for engaging with the families of ELL scholars to foster a supportive learning environment.*

Gifted Scholars
Policy and Safeguard Training*: Educators will review policies and procedural safeguards specific to the needs of gifted scholars.*

- **Identification and IEP Review**: The plan includes training on recognizing scholars who may benefit from gifted services and an in-depth study of their unique IEPs.
- **Lesson Planning with Coordinators**: Educators will work with the Academics Coordinator to create plans that incorporate gifted scholars' learning goals and required accommodations.
- **Mock IEP Meetings for Gifted Scholars**: These sessions will help educators develop skills for engaging in productive, collaborative IEP meetings with families and other stakeholders.
- **Ongoing IEP Review**: Regular updates and reviews of IEP goals will keep educators focused on the advanced needs of gifted scholars.
- **Family Communication**: Building and maintaining positive communication with the families of gifted scholars will be a key part of training.

Scholars with 504 Plans

- **Policy and Plan Review**: Professional development will cover the policies supporting scholars with 504 Plans and the procedures for qualifying these scholars.
- **Anatomy and Application of 504 Plans**: Educators will learn the structure and purpose of 504 Plans and review real cases.
- **Lesson Planning with the DEI Coordinator**: Educators will collaborate with the DEI Coordinator to integrate learning goals and accommodations.
- **Mock 504 Plan Meetings**: Educators will participate in simulated 504 Plan meetings to understand expectations for effective family and school collaboration.
- **Ongoing Review of 504 Plans**: Teachers will maintain access to 504 Plan details to ensure consistent support of these scholars.
- **Family Relationship Building**: Training on relationship-building and communication skills will help educators engage meaningfully with families of scholars with 504 Plans.

Scholars At-Risk

- **Policy Review and Scholar Identification**: Teachers will be trained on policies supporting at-risk scholars and on the identification process for creating individualized support plans.
- **At-Risk Scholar Corrective Action Plans**: Educators will study the components of corrective action plans to support at-risk scholars, with opportunities for practical application.
- **Collaborative Lesson Planning**: Teachers will work with the DEI Coordinator to align lesson plans with corrective action plans, incorporating necessary modifications.
- **Mock Meetings for At-Risk Scholars**: Simulations of corrective action plan meetings will help educators understand collaborative planning with families and providers.
- **Plan Review and Monitoring**: Ongoing reviews of corrective action plans will ensure institutional support aligns with scholars' developmental and academic needs.
- **Effective Communication**: Training will emphasize strategies to establish trust and communicate with families of at-risk scholars, creating a network of support around each child.

Section 2.5 - Professional Development
(Required for All Sponsors)

Culture	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Management Trajectory Leading a High-Quality School Culture • Social-Emotional Learning and Support • Character Education • Collaborative Problem-Solving • Social-Emotional Resilience Support Practice Clinics	**Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence: Management Trajectory.** Teachers and school leaders will participate in weekly coaching cycles for continuous improvement of their instructional practices in the classroom. Teachers will receive feedback using the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for management. Teachers will receive live coaching from their instructional coaches (Proposed Executive Director in Year 1). Live coaching is when the instructional coach gives feedback to the teacher to implement in the moment to push instructional practices. This may also include the instructional coach modeling a strategy with scholars during class for the teacher. All teachers will meet 1:1 with their instructional coach each week to discuss observation feedback, practice strategies and upcoming lessons, and check-in on professional development goals. At full scale, the school leadership team will split the coaching load of teachers. Each school leader will be coached by the Proposed Executive Director and will participate in a weekly leadership team meeting to discuss goals for the school and individual leadership goals. for the school and individual leadership goals. **Leading a Positive School Culture.** To remain committed to the needs of our scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members, we will engage in ongoing professional learning and development to ensure our practices are fully aligned to our mission and vision, and to identify best practices and models, inside and outside our school, that demonstrate the school culture we want to reinforce and refine over time. This work will be led by our Proposed Executive Director in partnership with the School Principal, Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, and Culture Coaches at full scale. **Practice Clinics.** Throughout the school year, teachers and school leaders will engage in regular practice of academic techniques within a defined feedback protocol. Teachers may be expected to deliver portions of an upcoming lesson, receive feedback from their colleagues, and implement the feedback in the moment to improve their practice as follows: (1) Teach a lesson segment with colleagues present. (2) Receive feedback from colleagues. (3) Implement feedback from colleagues. (3) Develop clear next steps to improve future instruction.
Operations	
Core Component	**Effective Implementation of Academic Plan**
Operationalizing High-Quality Schoolwide Systems and Routines	The Operations Managers will provide ongoing professional learning and development to support our schoolwide operations systems and routines. Our systems and routines will be adaptive over time as our school continues to grow.

Section 2.5c: Provide an overview of professional development (PD) that will take place prior to and during the first year of operation. Detail how the school's leadership will determine needed PD.

Novus SMART Academy's professional development plan is strategically designed to support and accelerate staff growth both before and during the school's first year of operation. This plan emphasizes differentiated learning for all teachers and staff, aligning with our commitment to meet individual professional development needs and strengthen the skills necessary for high-quality instruction and student success.

Pre-Opening Professional Development (Summer Institute). *Before the school year begins, all staff will attend the Novus SMART Institute, an intensive training program focused on grounding educators in the academy's mission, vision, and Noble Core Values. Key components include:*

- **Introduction to Core Academic Frameworks**: Teachers and staff will be trained in our core curricula, instructional practices, and assessment strategies, preparing them for consistent and effective classroom implementation.
- **Classroom Management and School Culture**: Sessions will cover strategies for establishing and maintaining a positive classroom environment, aligned with our behavior expectations and character education model.

Section 2.5 - Professional Development
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Specialized Training for Inclusion**: Staff will receive foundational training on serving diverse learners, including scholars with disabilities, English Language Learners, and gifted students, to ensure inclusivity across classrooms.

Ongoing Professional Development During the School Year. Throughout the first year, we have a structured yet flexible plan to provide ongoing professional development, ensuring continuous growth based on observed needs and data from the classroom.

- **Weekly Coaching and Observations**
- School leadership and instructional coaches will conduct weekly observations, walkthroughs, and individual coaching meetings to assess teachers' instructional practices and classroom dynamics.
- Coaches will provide immediate feedback and support through regular check-ins, guiding teachers to address areas of improvement while leveraging their strengths.
- **After-School Professional Development**
- We will hold weekly after-school professional development sessions, which may include whole-group, small-group, or individual learning opportunities. Topics will be carefully selected based on data gathered from observations, teacher feedback, and specific needs that emerge as the year progresses.
- An example of differentiated professional development includes grouping staff based on their needs. For instance, one group may focus on **implementing cooperative learning** techniques, while another works on **enhancing behavior-specific praise** to reinforce positive classroom management.
- **Differentiated and Choice-Based PLD**
- Recognizing that experience does not always equate to proficiency, PLD sessions are differentiated based on each teacher's strengths, growth areas, and individual pace of development.
- At times, staff will have the option to choose from sessions that align with their goals and interests. In other cases, instructional coaches may assign specific sessions to target identified areas for improvement.
- Determining and Adjusting Ongoing Professional Development Needs. School leadership at Novus SMART Academy will use a data-driven approach to assess ongoing professional development needs throughout the year:
    - **Observation and Data Analysis**: Leadership will gather data from regular walkthroughs, classroom observations, and student outcomes to determine specific skill gaps and areas needing reinforcement.
    - **Professional Development Surveys**: Periodic surveys will capture teacher feedback, allowing staff to express their needs, preferences, and areas where they seek further development.
    - **Targeted PD Groups and Focus Areas**: Based on observations and data, staff may be grouped by experience level or focus area. For example, novice teachers may focus more on classroom management, while experienced staff might work on refining instructional strategies or leadership skills.

Section 2.5d: Describe how faculty and staff who are hired mid-year will receive orientation training relative to the charter school's academic plan.

To ensure mid-year hires receive orientation and training that aligns with Novus SMART Academy's academic plan, we have developed a structured and supportive onboarding process. This approach ensures that all teachers, school leaders, and staff joining after the start of the school year are thoroughly prepared to integrate into our unique school culture and to implement our mission, vision, and academic priorities effectively.

Mid-Year Hire Onboarding Process

- **Mission- and Vision-Driven Orientation**
- Every new hire begins with a comprehensive orientation that familiarizes them with Novus SMART Academy's mission, vision, Noble Core Values, and schoolwide systems and routines.
- The orientation will cover the core principles and practices that define our academic approach, ensuring alignment with the school's educational standards from the outset.
- **Personalized Onboarding Plans**
    - For each mid-year hire, a personalized onboarding plan is created to address their specific role and needs. These plans cover key topics and training sessions initially presented in the Novus SMART Institute.
- Onboarding includes a review of prior professional development resources tailored to the new hire's responsibilities and skill level, ensuring they are equipped to implement the academic plan effectively.
- **Assigned Mentor and Instructional Coach**
- Each new teacher or staff member is paired with a faculty mentor who works at the same grade level or serves in a similar role, providing an additional support layer throughout the onboarding process.
- Mid-year hires also work closely with an instructional coach who will support their integration into the school community and academic practices. This includes regular check-ins and coaching sessions to address specific questions or challenges.
- **Scheduled Observations and Feedback**

- To facilitate a smooth transition, mid-year hires receive more frequent classroom observations, followed by debriefs and coaching sessions, allowing them to align their practices with school expectations and receive timely feedback.
- Observations provide insights into how effectively the new hire is implementing core instructional methods, co-teaching strategies (if applicable), and classroom management techniques.
- **Gradual Integration through Co-Teaching Model**
- In our co-teaching model, mid-year hires work alongside an experienced Novus teacher, offering them immediate access to classroom support and collaborative planning.
- This model enables new teachers to observe and practice effective teaching strategies, receive guidance on accommodating student needs, and build confidence in our academic setting.
- **Ongoing Professional Learning and Development**
- All new hires participate in professional learning sessions designed to ensure a shared understanding of the academic framework and instructional practices.
- The school will use data-driven professional development surveys and schoolwide metrics to tailor ongoing learning opportunities, ensuring both general and individualized professional growth.
- **Differentiated Professional Development Opportunities**
- Recognizing the importance of differentiated learning for adult learners, we provide professional development options and resources that are relevant to each hire's role and experience level. This includes access to Tennessee's Best for All Central Online Academic Tool for ongoing training opportunities.
- Teachers receive allocated budgets for additional training options, empowering them to take ownership of their professional growth and align with the school's commitment to academic excellence.

Section 2.5e: Describe the plan to provide professional development for school leadership. Detail how the plan will ensure that current and future leadership will have access to the knowledge needed to effectively manage and lead the school.

To ensure effective management and leadership at Novus SMART Academy, we have developed a PLD plan focused on building strong, capable leaders equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for our unique and innovative school model. This approach creates structured pathways for leadership growth within the organization, benefiting both staff and students while supporting the school's long-term success. Our plan emphasizes the identification and nurturing of high-performing teachers who demonstrate alignment with our mission and effectiveness in their current roles, offering them opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and advance into leadership roles.

Leadership Pathway. The leadership pathway at Novus SMART Academy provides a clear trajectory for staff interested in progressing within the organization. The pathway includes the following stages:

1. Teacher in Residence → Teacher
2. Teacher → Teacher Leader → Instructional Coach or Culture Coach
3. Instructional Coach or Culture Coach → Assistant Principal
4. School Counselor/MTSS-Behavior Coordinator → Assistant Principal
5. Assistant Principal → Director (at full scale)
6. Director → School Principal

This sequence enables staff to progressively expand their impact, moving from classroom instruction to broader roles that influence school culture, academics, and operations.

Teacher Leaders. The teacher leader pathway is designed for highly effective educators who wish to remain in the classroom but also aspire to extend their influence through additional responsibilities. Teacher leaders will receive stipends for their contributions and may take on roles such as:

- Coaching Teachers in Residence
- Teacher Coach
- Grade-Band Leader
- Content Leader

To support these teacher leaders in their expanded roles, various adjustments may be made to their teaching schedules, including differentiated teaching loads, summer learning fellowships, extended contracts (11 or 12 months), and/or targeted instructional and culture-based coaching.

Year 1 Leadership Development Structure. In Year 1, the Proposed Executive Director will hire an Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and an Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement. They will play critical roles in building the school's academic and school culture foundation, with responsibilities such as:

Section 2.5 - Professional Development
(Required for All Sponsors)

- **Assistant Principal of Scholar Access:** Coordinate contracted services for our Special Education Program, coach Special Education Teachers and ESL Teachers, and Manage the School Counselor & MTSS Academics and Behavior Coordinator. This person will also serve as the Building Test Coordinator.
- **Assistant Principal of Students and Community Engagement:** Cultivate community partnerships, oversee the Family Advisory Council and Engagement, support the implementation of Character Education, and ensure the development of a positive school culture and supports academic initiatives across all programs.

The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will receive targeted professional development with the goal of transitioning into higher leadership roles as the school grows and develops into a network of schools. This structure ensures a steady development of leaders who are already integrated into the school culture and committed to our mission. Over time, high-performing Assistant Principals and Directors (at full scale) will be considered for roles such as School Principal, or other network-based leadership roles, provided they demonstrate capacity and effectiveness in their responsibilities as the school grows and develops into a network of schools.

Retaining and Developing Talent. Our focus on leadership development serves as a retention strategy, enabling Novus SMART Academy to maintain a pipeline of high-quality leaders and teachers. This approach ensures a continuity of school vision and practices and establishes an internal talent pool capable of stepping into key roles as the school expands. High-performing teachers are always considered for leadership opportunities, reinforcing a culture of growth, excellence, and upward mobility within our organization.

Section 2.6 – Transportation
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.6a: Describe the plan to provide daily transportation to students, if applicable.

Novus SMART Academy recognizes that transportation is essential for reducing barriers to school attendance and engagement, particularly for families in our targeted communities of Smyrna and La Vergne. To ensure that all families have access to our high-quality educational offerings, we are committed to providing daily, reliable, and accessible transportation for all students, including transportation for extracurricular activities, field trips, and other school-related events.

Daily Transportation Services and Community Needs. Through a partnership with a private transportation provider, Novus SMART Academy will offer daily bus routes for morning arrivals and afternoon dismissals. Our budgetary model assumes that approximately 70% of our student body will use these transportation services. To keep these routes efficient and family-friendly, we will work with a private transportation provider to design bus routes that minimize travel times and optimize pickup and drop-off locations, prioritizing areas of Smyrna and La Vergne where community engagement has indicated the greatest need for transportation support.

Budgetary Assumptions and Financial Impact. Our expenditures for transportation services now includes a 5-year pricing estimation that was provided by Michael Boettcher, the Director of Business Development at Durham School Services and Wise Coaches of Nashville. The daily rates included will cover 6 hours of driver labor per day, in which Micheal anticipates will be sufficient for our transportation needs. Code 72210 355: Assumes 2 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $482.01 per day for 180 days in Year 1 with 70% participation (135 students; buses total: $260,287.02). Assumes 3 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $501.29 per day for 180 days in Year 2 with 70% participation (202 students; buses total: $360,931.33). Assumes 4 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $521.35 per day for 180 days in Year 3 with 70% participation (269 students; buses total: $469,210.73). Assumes 5 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $542.20 per day for 180 days in Year 4 with 70% participation (336 students; buses total: $585,575.00). Assumes 6 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $563.89 per day for 180 days in Year 5 with 70% participation (403 students; buses total: $710,497.66). Assumes $4000 per grade level for annual field trips and after-school activities (will conduct the RFP vendor process).

Section 2.6 – Transportation
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.6b: Describe the plan to provide applicable transportation services related to extracurricular activities, field trips, summer camps, post-secondary visits, work-based learning etc. Detail the budgetary impact and assumptions related to transportation services.

Transportation for Extracurricular Activities and Field Trips. *To support a well-rounded educational experience, Novus SMART Academy will provide transportation for extracurricular activities, field trips, and other school events.*

- **Field Trips and After School Activities**: Transportation for field trips during school hours and after-school activities are fully budgeted and included in our budget (Attachment W). This includes round-trip transportation for each planned trip, ensuring safe and reliable access to off-campus learning experiences.
- **After-School Activities**: Our transportation budget reflects an assumption of approximately $4,000 per grade level for after-school programs as feasible, supporting students in participating in a range of extracurricular activities.
- **Budgetary Assumptions and Financial Impact.** Our transportation budget reflects an assumption of approximately $4,000 per grade level for annual field trips each school year based on local market research in Rutherford County.

Section 2.6c: Describe the plan to provide transportation to students whose individualized education plan (IEP) requires transportation to ensure the student receives a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) pursuant to 34 CFR §300.34(c).

Novus SMART Academy will ensure full compliance with federal regulations, including 34 CFR §300.34(c), to meet the transportation needs of students with disabilities as specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), thereby supporting their right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Our transportation plan prioritizes both compliance and responsiveness to the specific needs of students, ensuring safe, efficient, and accessible transportation.

Selection of a Qualified Transportation Contractor. Novus SMART Academy will partner with a private transportation provider experienced in accommodating students with disabilities, including those who require special transportation as outlined in their IEPs. We will ensure that the selected provider meets all federal and state requirements for transporting students with disabilities, including vehicle modifications, specialized equipment, and trained personnel capable of providing necessary assistance. The costs for these services are included in our projected budget, with flexibility for adjustments if additional students need special transportation (Attachment W).

IEP-Based Transportation Services. Transportation will be provided as a related service for students whose IEPs specify transportation needs. This may include specialized vehicles, equipment such as lifts and restraints, and trained aides or monitors to support students during transit. The transportation vendor will be required to work closely with our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to review and adhere to each student's IEP requirements, ensuring that services align with their unique needs.

Route Planning and Collaboration. After gathering transportation requirements from families, Novus SMART Academy will design routes that minimize travel time for students with special needs, aiming to reduce any unnecessary time on the bus. We will collaborate with families and local community organizations to create routes that best support the logistics for students and their families, prioritizing efficient routes that reduce travel time and enhance comfort.

Compliance Monitoring and Training. Our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, along with the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will oversee compliance with all special education transportation requirements.

- **Ongoing Training.** We will collaborate with our private transportation provider to ensure drivers and aides receive specialized training in supporting students with disabilities, including safe transport practices, emergency procedures, and behavior management strategies.
- **Regular Audits.** The transportation program will be reviewed regularly to ensure adherence to IEP requirements, and adjustments will be made as necessary to meet any changes in student needs or federal/state regulations.

Budget Adjustments and Resource Allocation. If the number of students needing special transportation exceeds initial estimates, we will allocate additional budgetary resources to cover these essential services. Our commitment to ensuring that students with disabilities receive appropriate transportation aligns with the broader mission to provide inclusive educational access. By selecting a qualified transportation provider, implementing IEP-based services, designing effective routes, and committing to regular compliance checks, Novus SMART Academy will provide safe and reliable transportation that meets the needs of students with disabilities, fully supporting their right to FAPE and access to high-quality education.

Section 2.6 – Transportation
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.6d: Describe how the transportation vendor will be selected or, in the alternative, how the proposed school will provide transportation.

To ensure that Novus SMART Academy's transportation services are safe, reliable, and fully compliant with state and federal regulations, we will implement a thorough, multi-step plan to select a qualified transportation vendor and establish protocols for ongoing oversight of daily operations. This process includes specific criteria for vendor selection, clear roles for oversight, and systems to monitor service quality.

Vendor Selection Process. Novus SMART Academy will select a transportation vendor through a competitive and rigorous request for proposal (RFP) process. This process will include the following steps:

1. **Establish Criteria for Vendor Selection.** Criteria will be based on safety, reliability, experience with charter schools, compliance with transportation regulations (including Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-2101 – 2119 and SBE Rule 0520-01-05), and experience with transporting students with disabilities in compliance with federal regulations (34 CFR §300.34(c)).
2. **Release of Request for Proposal (RFP)**: We will issue an RFP that details our requirements.
    1. Safe and reliable daily transportation for arrival and dismissal.
    2. Flexibility to support transportation for field trips and extracurricular activities.
    3. Specialized transportation for students with disabilities as needed for IEP compliance.
    4. Ability to meet or exceed safety standards, including vehicle maintenance, driver qualifications, and background checks.
3. **Vendor Evaluation and Selection.** The selection committee, led by our Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance and including our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, will review proposals and evaluate potential vendors based on their adherence to our criteria across several key areas:
    1. Safety record and maintenance protocols.
    2. Compliance with state and federal requirements.
    3. Capacity to provide special transportation services.
    4. Community engagement and customer service record.
    5. Pricing and budget alignment.
4. **Interview and Site Visit. S**hortlisted vendors will be invited for interviews and site visits to assess their operations, review safety protocols, and ensure alignment with Novus SMART Academy's expectations.
5. **Contract Negotiation and Finalization.** Once a vendor is selected, the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will negotiate contract terms, including service level agreements (SLAs) that outline key expectations for performance, communication, and reporting.

Section 2.6e: Detail whether the proposed school will provide its own transportation services, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof. Describe the plan to provide oversight of transportation services and identify who on the school's staff will provide this daily oversight.

Daily Oversight of Transportation Operations. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contract out for transportation. Oversight of transportation services will be primarily managed by the **Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance**, with additional support from the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access to ensure IEP compliance for students with disabilities.

1. **Responsibilities of the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance**
    1. **Daily Oversight.** Coordinate with the transportation vendor daily to monitor routes, timing, and any incidents or delays that may occur.
    2. **Compliance and Safety Monitoring.** Ensure that drivers, vehicles, and routes meet regulatory compliance standards, including scheduled maintenance checks and driver credential reviews.
    3. **Communication and Issue Resolution.** Serve as the primary point of contact for families, addressing transportation-related questions or concerns within 48-72 hours. Manage complaints and resolve issues in collaboration with the vendor.
    4. **Documentation and Reporting.** Maintain detailed records of transportation operations, including maintenance logs, incident reports, and route adjustments. Submit quarterly reports to the board to review the vendor's performance.
2. **Support from the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access:**
    1. **IEP Compliance.** Work with the transportation vendor to ensure that students with special needs are receiving the appropriate accommodations specified in their IEPs.
    2. **Specialized Training.** Coordinate specialized training for drivers and aides who transport students with disabilities to ensure they meet FAPE requirements.

Section 2.6 – Transportation
(Required for All Sponsors)

Monitoring and Quality Assurance. To maintain high-quality service, Novus SMART Academy will implement ongoing quality assurance measures:

1. **Quarterly Performance Reviews.** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will conduct quarterly reviews of the transportation vendor, assessing adherence to SLAs and safety protocols, responsiveness, and satisfaction rates.
2. **Annual Contract Review.** The board will review the vendor's performance annually and determine if any adjustments or additional support are needed to enhance service quality.
3. **Family Feedback Surveys.** Families will be surveyed periodically to gather feedback on their transportation experiences, which will inform any necessary improvements or adjustments.

Contingency and Emergency Planning. In the event of delays, breakdowns, or emergencies, our vendor will provide backup transportation options. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will coordinate with the vendor to ensure families are informed promptly of any changes to service.

Section 2.6f: Explain how the proposed school will ensure compliance with all federal and state transportation laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, T.C.A. § 49-6-2101 - 2119 and SBE Rule 0520-01-05.

Novus SMART Academy is committed to fully complying with all applicable state and federal transportation regulations, including Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) §§ 49-6-2101 – 2119 and the State Board of Education (SBE) Rule 0520-01-05, which govern pupil transportation and set standards for safety, service, and operational integrity. Our plan will ensure safe and reliable transportation that meets these standards, along with all related federal requirements, including the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for displaced or homeless students.

Oversight and Accountability. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will be responsible for managing the partnership and contract with our selected private transportation provider. This role includes ensuring that all aspects of transportation- such as driver qualifications, vehicle safety, and operational practices- are fully compliant with T.C.A. § 49-6-2116, which mandates safe transportation for students. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will also work closely with the private transportation provider to establish a system for regular compliance checks, reporting, and record maintenance.

Vendor Collaboration and Compliance Systems. In coordination with the private transportation provider, Novus SMART Academy will establish systems to:

- **Maintain Up-to-Date Records.** This includes ensuring documentation for driver credentials, background checks, training records, vehicle inspections, and maintenance logs, which will be kept accessible for review by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance and relevant regulatory bodies.
- **Driver Training and Compliance:** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will ensure that all drivers and monitors receive training aligned with T.C.A. § 49-6-2109, which requires specific qualifications for school bus drivers. This training will include protocols for maintaining safety standards, student conduct management, and emergency response.
- **Vehicle Inspections and Maintenance:** All vehicles used for transportation will undergo routine inspections and maintenance, as required by T.C.A. §§ 49-6-2108 and 49-6-2110, with records kept to verify compliance. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will coordinate with the transportation vendor to ensure vehicles meet all state and federal safety standards, including those set by the SBE.

Compliance with McKinney-Vento Requirements. As required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Novus SMART Academy will work with a private transportation provider to provide transportation for students who are homeless or temporarily displaced, even when they reside outside typical transportation zones. This includes establishing flexible routes and ensuring timely transportation that accommodates students' living situations without disrupting their educational access.

Complaint Management and Response. To address concerns and uphold service quality, Novus SMART Academy will implement a structured complaint process managed by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance. Families can submit transportation-related complaints, which will be documented, reviewed, and responded to within 48–72 hours. This process will be outlined in the family handbook, ensuring transparent communication and quick resolution.

Continuous Training and Monitoring. *Ongoing training sessions and compliance audits will be held to maintain adherence to SBE Rule 0520-01-05 and relevant transportation codes. These measures will be facilitated by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance in collaboration with a private transportation provider, focusing on areas such as route safety, operational integrity, and adherence to state regulations.*

Section 2.6 – Transportation
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.6g: If the school will not provide daily transportation services to and from school, describe how students will get to and from school and how the school will address any transportation barriers for student attendance.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide daily transportation as outlined above.

Section 2.7 - Additional Operations
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 2.7a: *Insurance:* State law requires that charter schools have appropriate insurance coverage. Sponsors should check with their district to determine the necessary coverage amounts. As Attachment Q, provide the following:

- **A list of the types and corresponding amounts of insurance coverage the proposed school will secure. Types of insurance should include, at minimum, workers' compensation, employer liability, property, professional liability, surety bonds pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-111(n), and sexual abuse.**
- **A letter of coverage from an insurance company stating they will provide the required coverage upon approval of the charter application. The letter should include provisions for assuring that the insurance provider will notify the Tennessee Department of Education within ten (10) days of the cancellation of any insurance it carries on the charter school, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-107(b)(19). *Note*: if the proposed school intends to have school athletics, additional liability coverage will be required.**

See Attachment Q: Click Here

Section 2.7b: Food Service Plan

- **Describe the plan to offer food service to the students. Within the proposal, detail how the proposed school will offer food service to students, as well as how the school will comply with applicable district, state, and federal guidelines and regulations related to food services.**
- **Describe how the school food service plans meet the needs of low-income students.**
- **Describe how the food service vendor will be selected or, in the alternative, how the proposed school will provide meals in-house.**

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement a comprehensive food service program to ensure all scholars have daily access to nutritious meals, supporting low-income families and maintaining compliance with district, state, and federal guidelines. Our food service plan includes selecting a provider through a structured Request for Proposal (RFP) process, exploring options with Rutherford County Schools, and considering both local service vendors. We will seek bids from local food service vendors and will compare contracts by reviewing per meal and reimbursable meals including milk, condiments applicable to the menu, serving utensils (if applicable), packaging and containers needed to transport food in a sanitary manner, and transportation to and from the school. All vendors must submit milk in a variety of fat contents as defined by current regulations of the National School Lunch Program. We have accounted for the delivery of meals in our facilities planning (Section 2.2). We will also work with our selected food vendor to ensure we have the proper equipment necessary to deliver meals in a sanitary manner.

Our proposed community and neighborhood have a high percentage of low-income students, and our enrollment targets mirror the community. Therefore, it is essential that we have a strategic plan to support food services to meet the needs of students identified as low-income. This first begins with accurate collection, reporting, and maintenance of free and reduced-price lunch information. These efforts will be led by our food service team to include the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement. This process will begin at the onset of enrollment and continue throughout family orientation. We will provide ongoing support regarding related forms and ensure that all families are able to complete them. Together, this team will work to explore options for food services that provide both breakfast and lunch to students. Additionally, the food service team will explore potential partnerships with community organizations to provide access to food services for families during non-school hours.

Selection of Food Service Provider

1. **RFP Process.** In Year 0, we will develop a RFP to attract competitive bids, ensuring both quality and affordability in food service options.
2. **Partnership with Rutherford County Schools.** We will explore contracting with Rutherford County Schools to leverage existing infrastructure and contribute to district revenue. Should this option be unavailable, we will consult other Tennessee charter schools for recommendations.
3. **Evaluating Providers.** Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will consider partnerships with national and local vendors, such Sage Dining Services, SLA Management, or Sodexo, for alternatives that meet our high standards for nutrition and affordability.
4. **Evaluation Criteria.** We will prioritize vendors based on their ability to meet USDA and state nutritional guidelines, provide individually packaged meals, and offer meal pricing and delivery options suitable for our needs.

Compliance and Nutritional Standards

1. **Federal and State Requirements.** Our food service provider will be required to comply with all federal nutritional standards, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and USDA guidelines. Meals (breakfast, lunch, and snacks) will meet USDA and Tennessee Department of Health standards, with provisions for diverse menu options.
2. **Sample Contract Provisions.** Contracts will include requirements for Tennessee Health Department inspections, HACCP programs, production records, "Buy American" provisions, and accommodation for food allergies, ensuring

all meals adhere to safety and regulatory standards. In accordance with T.C.A. §§ 49-6-2301-- 2307, sample contract provisions and expectations include:

1. Maintaining Tennessee Health Department Bi-Annual Inspection with a Passing Score
2. Having a HACCP program in place and being able to provide proof of such.
3. Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Food Production Records
4. Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Component Documentation
5. Maintaining a "Buy American" Provision
    1. Maintaining 21-day Monthly Cycle Menus
    2. Making accommodations for Food Allergies
    3. Insuring hot meals maintained at 140 degrees or above and cold meals at 40 degrees or below prior to and during transport and delivery
    4. Providing meals that are individually packaged and sealed.
    5. All meals will be priced as a unit, which meet USDA requirements
    6. Any provider shall implement the "Traditional Menu Planning Approach"
    7. All meals and menus will be appropriate to the age of Novus SMART Academy students
    8. The provider substitutes food components for a student with disabilities (7 C.F.R. Section 15b) if their disability restricts their diet.
6. **CEP Consideration.** Depending on demographics, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will explore Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) status under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act to simplify access to free meals for qualifying families.
    1. **Eligibility.** To be eligible, a school district or group of schools must have an identified student percentage of at least 40% by April 1. Identified students are those who participate in programs like SNAP, TANF, or are considered homeless, migrant, or foster children.
    2. **Benefits.** Schools that adopt CEP don't need to collect household applications for free meals. Instead, they are reimbursed based on the percentage of students who are eligible for free meals.
    3. **Decision.** CEP is voluntary for school districts, and they must determine if it's financially viable.
7. **Access for Low-Income Families**
    1. **Income Verification.** During enrollment, we will collect income verification forms to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. All eligible families will have access to meals at minimal to no cost.
    2. **Confidentiality.** Participation in free/reduced meal programs will be confidential, ensuring no stigma for qualifying students.
    3. **Reduced Fees.** If CEP designation is unavailable, reduced rates will be applied for qualifying families to maintain affordability.
8. **Facility and Equipment Planning**
    1. **Food Storage and Service.** We will establish dedicated facilities for food storage, including warmers and coolers, to maintain required temperatures. Meals may be served in either the cafeteria or classrooms, based on available space.
    2. **Necessary Equipment.** The chosen vendor will work with us to ensure our facilities are equipped for sanitary meal delivery and distribution.
9. **Community Engagement and Support**
    1. **Food Service Team.** Led by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, Assistant Principal of Scholar Access, and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement, our team will coordinate food service partnerships and assist families with enrollment and verification forms.
    2. **Extended Services.** To further support families, we will seek partnerships with local organizations to provide access to food resources outside of school hours.

Section 2.7c : Technology

- **List the technology required to meet the academic and operational needs of the proposed school.**
- **List technology needed for classrooms, computer and science labs, library/media center, auditorium, main office, copy rooms, teacher work rooms, and other relevant spaces.**
- **Describe how the proposed school will ensure student access to the technology required for state-mandated assessments; include infrastructure requirements and costs in the operating budget template and narrative.**

1:1 Technology Access. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will establish and maintain a wireless internet network system. Classroom Chromebooks will be used in both elementary and middle school grades. All staff will also receive a school-issued laptop. While computer usage for students will be limited daily, we will purchase laptops that allow a 1:1 student ratio. This will allow Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to execute online Tennessee state testing, as well as to efficiently administer universal screeners and progress monitoring. All elementary and middle school classrooms will also have one

projector and a document camera, to project onto a whiteboard for successful execution of academic programming. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will partner and contract with a vendor to oversee IT Services, repairs, and maintenance.

State Testing. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) Test Administration for Computer-Based testing requirements and work in collaboration with our IT vendor to ensure compliance using the Test Administrator's Checklist provided by the TDOE. Below details guidance from Spring 2025. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will utilize the most updated testing procedures. While our preparation will include compliance with all guidelines, we detail below specific guidelines as it pertains to the use of computers for state testing.

- Attend the test administrator training session or complete an online administrator training.
- Review the Test Administration Manual (TAM).
- Review the non-secure Test-Administrator/Proctor Scripts (TAPS).
- Online administration security protocols.
- Training for test administrators on State Test Security Guidelines.
- Review of Test Security Manuals.
- Verify access to PearsonAccess-next.
- Coordinate with Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s IT vendor to ensure all testing devices have the testing platform application installed.
- Confirm all students are scheduled to be tested as in the PearsonAccess-next platform. If a student cannot be found, immediately notify the building testing coordinator (BTC). Students not found in PearsonAccess-next cannot participate in online testing.
- If the TestNav application is not on a testing device, inform the BTC immediately.
- Review and training on Tennessee Comprehensive Accessibility and Accommodations Manual.
- School preparation for online testing in testing sessions.
    - Ensure the availability of TestNav Quick Tips for Students (Navigation & Tools) handout.
    - Test Administrators monitor student testing.
        - Only PearsonAccess-next should be open on the TA's device.
        - Student progress should be monitored throughout each subpart.
    - Student Preparation.
        - Test Administrators are not allowed to assist students with TestNav functionality and navigation during online testing. Discuss accessibility and accommodations tools with students prior to testing to explain the materials or types of assistance available to them during the assessment. Students may use the Quick Tips for Tools in TestNav handout. This resource is also available on LiveBinders, in the TAPS appendix, and from the BTC
    - Student Materials
        - Students may have only the following materials at their workspace during testing for computer-based materials.
        - Testing device that meets the minimum technology specifications (Chromebooks).
        - Student Testing Ticket – provides the username and password needed to sign into TestNav.
        - Materials necessary for the administration of accommodations or accessibility features.
        - Headphones for students using text-to-speech.
        - Scratch paper and two No. 2 pencils.
        - Reference sheets for Mathematics and Science assessments: If not printed, reference materials are available to students through the Exhibits tab in TestNav. One handheld calculator that meets allowable requirements as detailed in Handheld Calculator Types.
    - After Testing Sessions
        - Ensure that all students have properly exited and signed out of TestNav.

All costs described in this section are reflected in our projected budget in **Attachment W**.

Section 2.7d: School Health

- **Describe the plan for compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program, including any plans to hire or contract with a school nurse.**
- **Identify who at the proposed school will supervise the school nurse and his/her role in ensuring compliance with health regulations.**

To ensure a robust plan for compliance with the Coordinated School Health Program at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the following outlines our strategy to foster a safe and healthy school environment that aligns with our mission, vision, and commitment to whole-child development. This plan addresses health services, physical and mental wellness initiatives, and identifies the individuals responsible for compliance and oversight.

1. **Health Services Provision**

Section 2.7 - Additional Operations
(Required for All Sponsors)

1. **Contracting a Registered Nurse.** As described in Attachment W, Novus SMART Academy will contract health services with a registered nurse. This nurse will manage critical health needs, including Individualized Health Plans, immunization compliance, and the overall student health program.
2. **Responsibilities of the Contracted Nurse.** The nurse will work closely with our Assistant Principal of Scholar Access and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to support students' physical and mental health needs comprehensively. Responsibilities will include coordinating care with external healthcare providers, ensuring emergency protocols are in place, and educating staff on health-related policies.

2. **Supervisory and Compliance Structure**
   1. **Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance.** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will supervise the contracted nurse and oversee the health services provided. This includes ensuring that the nurse complies with all state and local health regulations and that services align with both the Coordinated School Health Program and the unique needs of our student population.
   2. **Proposed Executive Director and Board of Directors.** Our budget template, which includes a line item for contracted health services, reflects the leadership's commitment to maintaining compliance with Coordinated School Health Program standards. If student needs exceed the current services, we will work with the Board to adjust funding and potentially hire a full-time nurse.
   3. **Budget Reallocation Process**: Should our health service needs surpass allocated funds, the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, Board Treasurer, Finance Committee, and back-office provider (EdTEc) will review the budget to make adjustments. This team will consider reallocating resources to support the health needs of our scholars fully, ensuring compliance and responsiveness to emerging health requirements.
3. **Expansion to Full-Time Health Staff**
   1. **Transition to a Full-Time Nurse.** As enrollment grows, the Novus SMART Academy will explore hiring a full-time nurse. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, in consultation with the Proposed Executive Director, will create a clear job description with defined roles and responsibilities for this position to ensure consistent support and regulatory compliance.
4. **Coordinated Health and Physical Activity Initiatives**
   1. **Movement Integration.** Recognizing the connection between physical movement and cognitive development, Novus SMART Academy will implement daily movement opportunities. Scholars will participate in morning chants and movement-based celebrations (7:30-8:00) and enjoy structured brain breaks to enhance focus and energy throughout the day.
   2. **Physical Education and Recess.** Scholars in Grades K-8 will have scheduled Physical Education sessions, with time allocations that increase within grade levels: 30 minutes for Grades K-3, 45 minutes for Grades 4-5, and 55 minutes for Grades 6-8. Additionally, Grades K-5 will participate in a 20-minute recess following a 30-minute lunch, while Grades 6-8 students will have options for recreation in our scholar recreational space during their 30-minute lunch.
   3. **Active Learning through Curriculum.** Movement will also be integrated into project-based learning (PBL) and inquiry-based learning (IBL) curricula, encouraging scholars to be physically active in tasks related to science, math, social studies, and other subjects. This active learning approach reinforces our mission to foster cognitive and physical well-being.
5. **Regular Monitoring and Evaluation**
   1. The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will conduct regular reviews of the health services and wellness programming to ensure compliance with school health regulations and effectiveness in supporting student success. This includes monitoring outcomes of physical activities and health interventions on student behavior, academic performance, and overall wellness.
   2. Our leadership team will also stay updated with resources and guidelines from the Tennessee Departments of Education and Health, ensuring that our health programming remains in alignment with state requirements and evidence-based best practices.

Section 2.7e: Safety Plan

- **Describe the plan for ensuring the safety and security of students, staff, guests, and property. Identify the person or position responsible for school safety operations.**
- **Describe the process and timeline for creating the school's emergency operations plan30.**

To ensure the safety and security of students, staff, guests, and property at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we have developed a comprehensive plan that outlines measures for school safety, details roles and responsibilities, and sets a clear process and timeline for creating our school's emergency operations plan. The following plan prioritizes safety through structured protocols, physical security measures, regular drills, and partnerships with local security experts.

1. **School Safety Operations and Oversight**
   1. **Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance.** This role will oversee all safety operations, ensuring compliance with state, district, and local guidelines for school safety. The Assistant Principal of

Operations and Finance will coordinate closely with the Rutherford County Schools security office, manage safety protocols, and track the implementation of security measures.

2. **Proposed Executive Director.** The Proposed Executive Director will work collaboratively with the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to review and approve safety plans, allocate resources, and participate in crisis preparedness reviews to ensure the highest standards of safety for all school community members.

2. **Safety and Security Measures**
    1. **Identification Badges.** All staff and visitors will wear identification badges on campus. Visitors must check in at the office, wear a badge while on school premises, and sign out upon departure. Staff will accompany visitors as needed.
    2. **Security Vestibules.** Following HB022 guidelines, the school's entryway will have security vestibules to control access to the building and protect students and staff from unauthorized entry.
    3. **AV Intercom Locks.** The main entrance will have camera intercom locks to allow office staff to screen visitors before granting entry, ensuring an additional layer of control and security.
    4. **Routine Drills and Monitoring.** The school will conduct monthly drills for fire, severe weather, lockdowns, and intruder situations to ensure readiness for various emergencies. A system for tracking, recording, and assessing drills will be implemented by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance.
    5. **Security Cameras.** A comprehensive security camera system will monitor the school's interior and exterior spaces, enabling real-time surveillance of all areas.
    6. **Visitor Management System.** To maintain safe entry, we will use a visitor management system that conducts background checks for all visitors. This system allows office staff to assess potential risks before granting access to the school.
3. **Emergency Operations Plan Development**
    1. **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Timeline**
        1. **Phase 1: Needs Assessment (Month 1-2 post-authorization).** Conduct a full review of facility security requirements with our Facilities Task Force. Unlimited Security will finalize an assessment to recommend upgrades and establish security goals tailored to our school's unique needs.
        2. **Phase 2: Drafting the EOP (Month 3-4 post-authorization).** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance and Proposed Executive Director will collaborate on creating a tailored Emergency Operations Plan. This plan will cover protocols for evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, reunification, and severe weather, as well as specify the roles of all staff members during emergencies.
        3. **Phase 3: Staff Training and Final Review (Month 5-6 post-authorization).** All staff members will receive training on EOP protocols, including participation in drill exercises. The plan will then undergo final review by the Facilities Task Force and our security partners to confirm it meets all safety standards.
        4. **Phase 4: EOP Rollout (2 Months Before School Opening).** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance and Proposed Executive Director will finalize and implement the EOP. Staff training sessions will continue through pre-opening professional development days, with refresher sessions scheduled periodically.
    2. **Timeline for Security Measures Implementation**
        1. **Two Months Before Opening.** Security upgrades (camera installation, intercom locks, panic buttons, and access control systems) will be completed to ensure the facility is fully prepared.
        2. **One Month Before Opening.** Final walkthrough with Unlimited Security and the Facilities Task Force to verify that all safety systems are in place and operational. At this time, we will confirm the scheduling and training plan for routine security checks and drills.
4. **SRO (School Resource Officer) Program Application**
    1. **Statewide School Resource Officer Program Grant.** Novus SMART Academy will apply annually for the SRO Program Grant, which funds law enforcement officers to serve as SROs. Should we receive funding, the SRO will play a key role in school security, acting as a liaison between law enforcement and the school. The SRO will support monitoring, addressing safety concerns, and assisting with emergency preparedness drills.
    2. **SRO's Role and Responsibilities.** In addition to enhancing security, the SRO will foster positive relationships with students, help mediate issues, and enforce applicable laws as needed to maintain a safe environment.
5. **Safety Policies for Student Drop-off, Pickup, and Visitors**
    1. **Drop-off and Pickup Procedures.** To streamline student entry and exit, authorized individuals will check in at designated pickup areas, with identity verification required for all visitors collecting students.
    2. **Visitor Protocols.** Building tours and volunteer activities must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance with the Operations Manager. Only individuals cleared by the Proposed Executive Director and verified through background checks will be permitted to interact with students.
6. **Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation**

Section 2.7 - Additional Operations
(Required for All Sponsors)

1. **Regular Assessments.** The Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will conduct monthly safety walkthroughs, supported by the Proposed Executive Director, to ensure the fidelity of security protocols and to address any needed improvements.
2. **Annual Safety Review and Updates.** The school will update its EOP annually, incorporating feedback from drills and adjusting for any new safety guidelines from Rutherford County Schools and Tennessee state regulations.

Section 2.8 - Charter Management Organization
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 6)

Section 2.9 – Network Vision, Growth Plan & Capacity
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 1,3,or 5)

Section 2.10 – Network Governance
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

Section 2.11 – Network Management and Personnel
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

Table 6: Decision Making Responsibilities
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

	Decision Maker	
Function	**Network Responsibility**	**School Responsibility**
Performance Goals		
Curriculum		
Professional Development		
Data Management		
Interim Assessments		
Promotion Criteria		
Culture		
Budgeting, Finance, and Accounting		
Student Recruitment		
School Staff Recruitment and Hiring		
Human Resources Services (payroll, benefits, etc.)		
Development / Fundraising		
Community Relations		
Information Technology		
Facilities Management		
Vendor Management / Procurement		
Other Operational Services, if applicable		

Table 7: School Projections
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

	Year of Operation					
Totals	**Prior to Opening**	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**
Number of elementary schools						
Number of middle schools						
Number of high schools						
Total number of schools						

Total projected student enrollment						

Table 8: Network Staff Projections
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

	Year of Operation					
Position	**Prior to Opening**	**1st**	**2nd**	**3rd**	**4th**	**5th**
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Leadership [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Support Role [specify]						
Total projected FTEs at CMO						

Table 9: School Staff Projections
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

NOTE: All positions are not required and/or may not apply to a charter school.	Year of Operation					
Position	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Principal(s)						
Supervisor / Director						
Internal Audit Personnel						
Classroom Teachers (core subjects)						
Classroom Teachers (electives, world languages)						
Special Education Teachers						
English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers						
Other Teachers						
Accountants/Bookkeepers						
Computer Programmer(s)						
Data Processing Personnel						
Purchasing Personnel						
Counseling Personnel						
Psychological Personnel						
Homebound Teachers						
Librarian(s)						
Social Workers						
Medical Personnel						
Material Supervisor(s)						
Assessment Personnel						
Audiovisual Personnel						
Education Media Personnel						
Instructional Computer Personnel						
Assistant Principal(s)						
Mechanic(s)						
Bus Drivers						
Guards						
Secretary(s)						
Clerical Personnel						
Educational Assistants						
Attendants						
Cafeteria Personnel						
Custodial Personnel						
Maintenance Personnel						
Part-time Personnel						
School Resource Officer						
Speech Pathologist						
Certified Substitute Teachers						
Non-certified Substitute Teachers						
Total FTEs						

Section 2.12 – School Replication *(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 4)*

Section 3.1 – Operating Budget (Required for All Sponsors)

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Charter School Creation Application Operating Budget Template

Proposed School Information

Proposed School Name	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
Lead Sponsor Name	Jeremy Sager
Lead Sponsor E-mail Address	jsager@novusSMARTaademy.org
Lead Sponsor Phone Number	615-663-9680
CMO/EMO Affiliation	Not Applicable

Proposed Authorizer	Rutherford County
Geographic District*	Rutherford County
Proposed Opening Grade Level(s)	K-1
Proposed Final Grade Level(s)	K-8
Proposed First Year of Operations	2026-27

**"Geographic District" means the school district that serves the geographic location in which the proposed charter school will operate.*

Student & Staff Counts

Student Enrollment Summary

	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Pre-Kindergarten *	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	96	96	96	96	96
1st Grade	96	96	96	96	96
2nd Grade	0	96	96	96	96
3rd Grade	0	0	96	96	96
4th Grade	0	0	0	96	96
5th Grade	0	0	0	0	96
6th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
7th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
8th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
9th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
10th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
11th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
12th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
Total Enrollment *(excluding Pre-Kindergarten)*	192	288	384	480	576
Change in Net Enrollment	192	96	96	96	96

**Pre-K funding is not included in the State and Local funding in this budget template, and Pre-K enrollment is excluded from the Total Enrollment student counts. If the school serves Pre-K students, sponsors must indicate the funding used to do so on the "3. Revenues" sheet and include related costs on the "4. Expenditures" sheet within this template.*

Staff FTE Counts**						
Object Code and Line-item Description	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
104 - Principal(s)	1	1	1	1	1	1
105 - Supervisor / Director	0	0	0	0	0	0
113 - Internal Audit Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
116 - Teachers - Classroom Teachers (core subjects)	0	8	12	16	20	24
116 - Teachers - Classroom Teachers (electives, world languages)	0	1	2	3	4	4
116 - Teachers - Special Education Teachers	0	2	3	4	5	6
116 - Teachers - English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers	0	2	3	4	5	6
116 - Teachers - Other Teachers (must add assumption notes)	0	1	1	1	1	1
116 - Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
118 - Secretary to Board	0	0	0	0	0	0
119 - Accountants/Bookkeepers	1	1	1	1	1	1
120 - Computer Programmer(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
121 - Data Processing Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
122 - Purchasing Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
123 - Guidance Personnel	0	1	1	2	2	2
124 - Psychological Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
128 - Homebound Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
129 - Librarian(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
130 - Social Workers	0	0	0	0	0	0
131 - Medical Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
132 - Material Supervisor(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
135 - Assessment Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
136 - Audiovisual Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
137 - Education Media Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
138 - Instructional Computer Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
139 - Assistant Principal(s)	3	3	4	5	5	5
142 - Mechanic(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
146 - Bus Drivers	0	0	0	0	0	0
160 - Guards	0	0	0	0	0	0
161 - Secretary(s)	0	1	1	1	1	1
162 - Clerical Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
163 - Educational Assistants	0	9	13	17	21	25
164 - Attendants	0	0	0	0	0	0
165 - Cafeteria Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
166 - Custodial Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
167 - Maintenance Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
169 - Part-time Personnel	0	1	2	6	7	7
170 - School Resource Officer	0	1	1	2	2	2
171 - Speech Pathologist	0	0	0	0	0	0
189 - Other Salaries & Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0
195 - Certified Substitute Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
198 - Non-certified Substitute Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	**5**	**32**	**45**	**63**	**75**	**85**

***Schools that serve Pre-K students should include Pre-K staff in the provided staff counts within this section.*
***All positions are not required and/or may not apply to a charter school.*

Section 3.1 – Operating Budget (Required for All Sponsors)

Revenue Assumptions

Directions: This sheet allows sponsors to provide the proposed authorizer with an overview of any assumed revenue streams. This sheet includes a pre-populated average per-student state and local fund revenue amount. The average per-student amount is based off the geographic LEA's most recently approved final expenditure report and is populated in this sheet based on the sponsor's chosen "Geographic District" on the "Proposed School Information" sheet.

Sponsors must enter the amount of cash on hand/in bank within the "Beginning Cash Balance" section. Additionally, sponsors must enter any revenue from other sources including, but not limited to, grants, fundraising, and philanthropy. Assumption notes should clearly explain details related to any revenue sources that the sponsor adds to this sheet. When listing revenues, sponsors do not need to include any projected federal passthrough revenues (e.g., Title I, Title II, etc.).

Average Per-Student State and Local Funds Revenue for the Selected Geographic LEA: ***$10,522.59***

Beginning Cash Balance	Year 0 2025-26
Cash on hand/in bank	

State & Local Revenues	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Average Per-Student State and Local Funds		$ 2,020,336.34	$ 3,030,504.51	$ 4,040,672.69	$ 5,050,840.86	$ 6,061,009.03

Grants / Fundraising / Philanthropy etc.	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Status of Funding	Assumption Notes
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 15,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	BES Start-up Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	CSP Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	Charter School Growth Fund
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$ 15,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	2024-2025 Z Combinator Fellowship Gift
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 750,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	In-planning	Building Hope - a non-profit facility developer fo
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	In-planning	TNDOE SRO Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	In-process	NewSchools Venture Fund
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$1,093,809.80	$1,640,544.33	$2,183,345.95	$2,730,080.47	$3,228,814.99	In-process	Projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and fed
TOTAL	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 1,683,809.80	$ 2,215,544.33	$ 2,333,345.95	$ 2,880,080.47	$ 3,378,814.99		

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,704,146.14	$ 5,246,048.84	$ 6,374,018.64	$ 7,930,921.33	$ 9,439,824.02

Directions: This sheet allows sponsors to summarize planned expenses using the object codes and line items from Tennessee's standardized chart of accounts. Sponsors must enter all relevant expense amounts for the pre-opening year (year 0) through the fifth year of operation and include notes for any items requiring further explanation or that are unique to the school's model.

This template is not the actual budget but a summary to demonstrate readiness to operate a charter school. Sponsors should align their budget assumptions to specific object codes as outlined within the Tennessee Department of Education's Standardized System of Accounting and Reporting Guidance Document. When an item spans multiple functions, sponsors must list all applicable functions within the "Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes" column.

Access the Standardized System of Accounting and Reporting Guidance Document here: https://eplan.tn.gov/DocumentLibrary/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentKey=2061546&inline=true

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **1. Personal Services**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
EXAMPLE: 116 Teachers	***$ -***	***$ 251,566.00***	***$ 375,896.00***	***$ 450,356.00***	***$ 651,232.00***	***$ 750,155.00***	***71100, 71200, 71300, 73400***
104 Principal(s)	$ 85,000.00	$ 108,000.00	$ 110,160.00	$ 112,363.20	$ 114,610.46	$ 116,902.67	Code 72410 104: Assumes salary of $85k for Proposed Executive
105 Supervisor / Director	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
113 Internal Audit Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
116 Teachers	$ -	$ 772,497.00	$ 1,217,684.16	$ 1,642,591.86	$ 2,075,997.63	$ 2,518,071.57	Code 71100 116: Assumes base salary up to $57,222 for Teachers
118 Secretary to Board	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
119 Accountants/Bookkeepers	$ 11,250.00	$ 45,000.00	$ 45,900.00	$ 46,818.00	$ 47,754.36	$ 48,709.45	Code 72410 119: Assumes salary of $45k for Office Manager in Y
120 Computer Programmer(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
121 Data Processing Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
122 Purchasing Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
123 Guidance Personnel	$ -	$ 62,424.00	$ 63,672.48	$ 127,369.93	$ 129,917.33	$ 132,515.68	Code 72130 123: Assumes base salary up to $62,424 for School C
124 Psychological Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
128 Homebound Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
129 Librarian(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
130 Social Workers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
131 Medical Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
132 Material Supervisor(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
135 Assessment Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
136 Audiovisual Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
137 Education Media Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
138 Instructional Computer Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
139 Assistant Principal(s)	$ 79,770.60	$ 237,211.20	$ 319,985.42	$ 404,415.13	$ 412,503.44	$ 420,753.50	Code 72410 139: Assumes base salary up to $81,151.20 with 2%
142 Mechanic(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
146 Bus Drivers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
160 Guards	$	$	$	$	$	$	N/A
161 Secretary(s)	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,700.00	$ 36,414.00	$ 37,142.28	$ 37,885.13	Code 72410 161: Assumes base salary of $35k with 2% annual in
163 Educational Assistants	$ -	$ 421,362.00	$ 617,061.24	$ 816,674.49	$ 1,020,280.00	$ 1,227,957.59	Code 71100 163: Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% ann
164 Attendants	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
165 Cafeteria Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
166 Custodial Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
167 Maintenance Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
169 Part-time Personnel	$ -	$ 10,440.00	$ 20,800.00	$ 30,400.00	$ 40,800.00	$ 48,800.00	
170 School Resource Officer	$ -	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	Code 72130 170: Assumes salary of $75k for School Resource Of
171 Speech Pathologist	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
189 Other Salaries & Wages	$ -	$ 15,000.00	$ 55,500.00	$ 306,750.00	$ 375,750.00	$ 443,450.00	Code 71100 188: <up to $3,000> EOY Tennessee Comprehensive
195 Certified Substitute Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
196 In-Service Training	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
198 Non-certified Substitute Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
TOTAL	**$ 176,020.60**	**$ 1,781,934.20**	**$ 2,561,463.30**	**$ 3,673,796.61**	**$ 4,404,755.50**	**$ 5,145,045.59**	

Section 3.1 – Operating Budget (Required for All Sponsors)

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **2. Employee Benefits**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
201 Social Security	$ 10,913.28	$ 109,832.64	$ 157,521.13	$ 225,890.59	$ 270,565.24	$ 315,967.23	Code 71100 201: Assumes 6.20% of all wages for Social Security
204 Pensions	$ 2,376.28	$ 23,915.17	$ 34,298.94	$ 49,185.85	$ 62,598.90	$ 68,799.32	Code 71100 204: TCRS Legacy assumes 9% of all wages for 15% c
206 Life Insurance	$ 176.02	$ 1,771.49	$ 2,540.66	$ 3,643.40	$ 4,363.96	$ 5,096.25	Code 71100 206: Assumes 0.1% of all wages for Life Insurance.
207 Medical Insurance	$ 12,375.00	$ 170,500.00	$ 236,500.00	$ 313,500.00	$ 374,000.00	$ 429,000.00	Code 71100 207: Assumes $5500 per FTE for medical insurance (
208 Dental Insurance	$ 843.75	$ 11,625.00	$ 16,125.00	$ 21,375.00	$ 25,500.00	$ 29,250.00	Code 71100 208: Assumes $375 per FTE for dental and vision ins
210 Unemployment Compensation	$ 900.00	$ 12,600.00	$ 18,400.00	$ 24,000.00	$ 28,600.00	$ 32,600.00	Code 71100 210: Assumes $400 per FTE for unemployment com
211 Local Retirement	$ 7,920.93	$ 79,717.24	$ 114,329.85	$ 163,952.85	$ 196,378.00	$ 229,331.05	Code 71100 211: Empower Local Retirement assumes 9% of all v
212 Employer Medicare	$ 2,552.30	$ 25,686.67	$ 36,839.62	$ 52,829.25	$ 63,277.35	$ 73,895.56	Code 71100 212: Assumes 1.45% of all wages for Employer Medi
215 On-behalf Payments to OPEB	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
217 Retirement Hybrid Stabilization	$ 5,544.65	$ 55,802.07	$ 80,030.89	$ 114,766.99	$ 137,464.60	$ 160,531.74	Code 71100 217: TCRS Hybrid assumes 9% of all wages for 35% d
TOTAL	**$ 43,602.21**	**$ 491,450.28**	**$ 696,586.09**	**$ 969,143.93**	**$ 1,162,748.05**	**$ 1,344,471.15**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **3. Contracted Services**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
302 Advertising	$ 11,500.00	$ 21,260.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	Code 72520 302: Assumes $5k in Year 0 for Student and Staff Rec
304 Architects	$ 10,000.00						Code 91300 304: Assumes $5k for 2 feasibility studies for propo
305 Audit Services	$ 2,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	Code 72310 305: Assumes $2k in Year 0 for 990 Services. Assume
307 Communication							
308 Consultants	$ 25,995.00	$ 25,995.00	$ 25,995.00	$ 10,995.00	$ 10,995.00	$ 10,995.00	Code 72210 308: Assumes $15k in Years 0-2 for BES Follow-on
309 Contracts With Government Agencies							
310 Contracts With Other Public Agencies							
311 Contracts With Other School Systems							
312 Contracts With Private Agencies							
313 Contracts With Parents							
314 Contracts With Public Carriers							
315 Contracts With Vehicle Owners							
317 Data Processing Services	$ 52,725.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	Code 72110 317: Assumes $52,575 in Year 0 for PowerSchool SIS
320 Dues & Memberships	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Code 72510 320: Assumes $0 per month for currently-open Hori
321 Engineering Services							
322 Evaluation & Testing	$ -	$ 38,400.00	$ 57,600.00	$ 76,800.00	$ 96,000.00	$ 115,200.00	Code 72130 322: Assumes $200 per student for assessments and
328 Janitorial Services	$ 4,781.25	$ 19,125.00	$ 25,875.00	$ 36,000.00	$ 46,350.00	$ 51,750.00	Code 72610 328: Assumes $0.15 per square foot per month for C
329 Laundry Service							
330 Lease/SBITA Payments							
331 Legal Services	$ 3,750.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	Code 72310 331: Assumes $3750 in Year 0 for potential legal fees
335 Maintenance & Repair Services Building	$ 7,968.75	$ 31,875.00	$ 43,125.00	$ 60,000.00	$ 77,250.00	$ 86,250.00	Code 72620 335: Assumes $3 per square foot for Maintenance &
336 Maintenance & Repair Services Equipment							
338 Maintenance & Repair Services Vehicles							
340 Medical and Dental Services	$ -	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	Code 72710 340: Assumes $4k per month from August to May in
342 Payments to Schools-Breakfast	$ -	$ 69,120.00	$ 103,680.00	$ 138,240.00	$ 172,800.00	$ 207,360.00	Code 73100 342: Assumes $2 per day (180 days) for breakfast per
343 Payments to Schools-Lunch	$ -	$ 120,960.00	$ 181,440.00	$ 241,920.00	$ 302,400.00	$ 362,880.00	Code 73100 343: Assumes $3.50 per day (180 days) for lunch per
344 Payments to Schools-Other							
345 Payments to Schools-Other USDA							
348 Postal Charges	$ -	$ 975.00	$ 1,440.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,880.00	Code 72110 348: Assumes $5 per scholar for postal charges with
350 Internet Connectivity	$ 9,894.00	$ 24,623.40	$ 26,108.40	$ 27,771.60	$ 29,078.40	$ 30,266.40	Code 72250 350: Assumes $300 in Year 0 for Technology Lab new
351 Rentals	$ 53,125.00	$ 212,500.00	$ 287,500.00	$ 400,000.00	$ 515,000.00	$ 575,000.00	Code 72610 351: Assumes $20 per square foot for Rent per year
354 Transportation Other Than Students							
355 Travel	$ -	$ 268,287.02	$ 372,931.33	$ 485,210.73	$ 605,575.00	$ 734,497.66	Code 72210 355: Assumes 2 regular education buses and 1 spe
356 Tuition							
359 Disposal Fees	$ 600.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	Code 72610 359: Assumes $200 per month for waste disposal (3
367 Maintenance & Repair Services Records							
369 Contracts for Substitute Teachers Certified	$ -	$ 12,000.00	$ 18,000.00	$ 24,000.00	$ 30,000.00	$ 36,000.00	Code 71100 369: Assumes $150 per day (10 days) for Certified Su
370 Contracts for Substitute Teachers Non-certified	$ -	$ 6,000.00	$ 9,000.00	$ 12,000.00	$ 15,000.00	$ 18,000.00	Code 71100 370: Assumes $75 per day (10 days) for Certified Sub
399 Other Contracted Services	$ 24,000.00	$ 85,000.00	$ 90,700.00	$ 126,550.00	$ 150,950.00	$ 196,350.00	Code 72510 399: Assumes $4k per month for Financial Managem
TOTAL	**$ 206,339.00**	**$ 1,021,605.42**	**$ 1,347,259.73**	**$ 1,745,272.33**	**$ 2,157,663.40**	**$ 2,531,294.06**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **4. Supplies and Materials**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
410 Custodial Supplies							
411 Data Processing Supplies							
412 Diesel Fuel							
413 Drugs & Medical Supplies	$ 200.00	$ 2,200.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,600.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,000.00	Code 72120 413: Assumes $200 per classroom and office space
415 Electricity	$ 10,625.00	$ 21,250.00	$ 28,750.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 51,500.00	$ 57,500.00	Code 72610 415: Assumes $2 per square foot per year for Utilitie
418 Equipment & Machinery Parts	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
422 Food Supplies							
423 Fuel Oil							
424 Garage Supplies							
425 Gasoline							
426 General Construction Materials							
429 Instructional Supplies & Materials	$ -	$ 86,800.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	Code 71100 429: Assumes $400 per student for curricula resourc
430 Textbooks Electronic							
432 Library Books/Media	$ -	$ 3,840.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	Code 72210 432: Assumes $20 per new student for classroom li
433 Lubricants							
434 Natural Gas							
435 Office Supplies	$ 1,000.00	$ 11,600.00	$ 14,200.00	$ 17,600.00	$ 34,200.00	$ 36,200.00	Code 72250 435: Assumes $800 in Years 1-2 for one copier lease
437 Periodicals							
448 T & I Construction Materials							
449 Textbooks Bound							
451 Uniforms	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
453 Vehicle Parts							
454 Water & Sewer	$ 600.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	Code 72610 454: Assumes $200 per month for water and sewer (
470 Cabling	$ 3,500.00						Code 72250 470: Assumes $3500 for average market rate for cabli
471 Software							
499 Other Supplies and Materials	$ 5,000.00	$ 111,140.00	$ 58,160.00	$ 62,080.00	$ 62,000.00	$ 62,920.00	Code 71100 499: Assumes $20 per student for printing paper (19
TOTAL	**$ 20,925.00**	**$ 239,230.00**	**$ 155,030.00**	**$ 174,000.00**	**$ 201,620.00**	**$ 210,340.00**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **5. Other Charges**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
501 Boiler Insurance							
502 Building & Content Insurance							
504 Indirect Cost							
505 Judgments							
506 Liability Insurance	$ 3,750.00	$ 17,500.00	$ 22,500.00	$ 27,500.00	$ 32,500.00	$ 37,500.00	Code 72310 506: Assumes $3750 for D and O liability insurance
508 Premium on Corporate Surety Bonds							
509 Refunds							
510 Trustee's Commission							
511 Vehicle and Equipment Insurance							
513 Workers Compensation							
524 In-Service / Staff Development	$ 2,500.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	Code 72210 524: Assumes $2500 in Year 0 and $5k in Years 1-5 an
533 Criminal Investigation of Applicants TBI							
534 Refund to Applicant for Criminal Investigation							
535 Fee Waivers							
590 Transfers Out							
595 TISA On-behalf Payments							
599 Other Charges	$ 125.00	$ 5,600.00	$ 8,325.00	$ 11,175.00	$ 13,875.00	$ 16,525.00	Code 71400 599: Assumes $25 per FTE for gifts and awards in Ye
TOTAL	**$ 6,375.00**	**$ 28,100.00**	**$ 35,825.00**	**$ 43,675.00**	**$ 51,375.00**	**$ 59,025.00**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **6. Debt Service**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
601 Principal on Bonds							
602 Principal on Notes							
603 Interest on Bonds							
604 Interest on Notes							
610 Principal on Leases							
611 Interest on Leases							
612 Principal on Other Loans Payable							
613 Interest on Other Loans Payable							
620 Debt Service Contribution to Primary Government							
699 Other Debt Service	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	Code 82330 699: Assumes $35k for authorizer fee in Years 1-5.
TOTAL	**$ -**	**$ 35,000.00**	**$ 35,000.00**	**$ 35,000.00**	**$ 35,000.00**	**$ 35,000.00**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **7. Capital Outlay**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
701 Administration Equipment							
704 Attendance Equipment							
707 Building Improvements	$ 850,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Code 76100 707: Assumes $850,000 for Building Improvements i
709 Data Processing Equipment							
710 Food Service Equipment							
711 Furniture & Fixtures	$ 7,500.00	$ 99,600.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 54,500.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 47,000.00	Code 91300 711: Assumes $500 per FTE (5.0) for staff furniture in
715 Land							
717 Maintenance Equipment							
720 Plant Operation Equipment							
722 Regular Instruction Equipment							
724 Site Development							
725 Special Education Equipment							
729 Transportation Equipment							
735 Health Equipment							
790 Other Equipment							
799 Other Capital Outlay							
TOTAL	**$ 857,500.00**	**$ 99,600.00**	**$ 49,500.00**	**$ 54,500.00**	**$ 49,500.00**	**$ 47,000.00**	

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
TOTAL EXPENSES	$1,310,761.81	$ 3,696,919.90	$ 4,880,664.12	$ 6,695,387.87	$ 8,062,661.95	$ 9,372,175.80

Section 3.1 – Operating Budget (Required for All Sponsors)

Summary

Note: Figures in this sheet are auto-calculated based on information provided within this template.

Starting Fund Balance

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Totals	$ -	$ 204,238.19	$ 211,464.43	$ 576,849.16	$ 255,479.92	$ 123,739.30

Revenues

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
State Revenues		$ 2,020,336.34	$ 3,030,504.51	$ 4,040,672.69	$ 5,050,840.86	$ 6,061,009.03
Grants / Fundraising / Philanthropy	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 1,683,809.80	$ 2,215,544.33	$ 2,333,345.95	$ 2,880,080.47	$ 3,378,814.99
Total Revenues	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,704,146.14	$ 5,246,048.84	$ 6,374,018.64	$ 7,930,921.33	$ 9,439,824.02

Expenditures

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Personal Services	$ 176,020.60	$ 1,781,934.20	$ 2,561,463.30	$ 3,673,796.61	$ 4,404,755.50	$ 5,145,045.59
Employee Benefits	$ 43,602.21	$ 491,450.28	$ 696,586.09	$ 969,143.93	$ 1,162,748.05	$ 1,344,471.15
Contracted Services	$ 206,339.00	$ 1,021,605.42	$ 1,347,259.73	$ 1,745,272.33	$ 2,157,663.40	$ 2,531,294.06
Supplies and Materials	$ 20,925.00	$ 239,230.00	$ 155,030.00	$ 174,000.00	$ 201,620.00	$ 210,340.00
Other Charges	$ 6,375.00	$ 28,100.00	$ 35,825.00	$ 43,675.00	$ 51,375.00	$ 59,025.00
Debt Service	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00
Capital Outlay	$ 857,500.00	$ 99,600.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 54,500.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 47,000.00
Total Expenses	$ 1,310,761.81	$ 3,696,919.90	$ 4,880,664.12	$ 6,695,387.87	$ 8,062,661.95	$ 9,372,175.80

Summary

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Starting Fund Balance	$ -	$ 204,238.19	$ 211,464.43	$ 576,849.16	$ 255,479.92	$ 123,739.30
Total Revenue	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,704,146.14	$ 5,246,048.84	$ 6,374,018.64	$ 7,930,921.33	$ 9,439,824.02
Total Available Funds (Starting Fund Balance + Total Revenue)	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,908,384.33	$ 5,457,513.28	$ 6,950,867.79	$ 8,186,401.25	$ 9,563,563.32
Total Expenses	$ 1,310,761.81	$ 3,696,919.90	$ 4,880,664.12	$ 6,695,387.87	$ 8,062,661.95	$ 9,372,175.80
Ending Fund Balance	$ 204,238.19	$ 211,464.43	$ 576,849.16	$ 255,479.92	$ 123,739.30	$ 191,387.52

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Section 3.2a: Explain how the operating budget is adequate to support full implementation of the school model and academic plan. Within the explanation, detail the minimum number of students that the school must enroll to sustainably operate and articulate the impact that the minimum enrollment would have on the budget.

To support our long-term sustainability and mitigate potential enrollment risks, Novus SMART Academy (K–8) has developed a strategy that aligns with both our mission and the realities of a competitive school choice landscape. One component of this strategy is our partnerships with Meredith McGann, Director of Policy & Outreach at Tennesseans for Student Success, and GrowthFuel Marketing through which we have significantly enhanced our community engagement efforts. With their support, we launched a targeted email marketing campaign informed by a data set of 599 families, each with a child between the ages of 4 and 7, residing in the 37167 or 37086 zip codes. These families also carry high likelihood scores (80–100) for both School Switch and School Choice, identifying them as strong prospective matches for our school model. While this data cannot be formally submitted with our application, a printed copy has been provided to Dr. Jeff McCann, Coordinator of Choice and Charter Schools at Rutherford County Schools, for review alongside the amended application.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s operating budget fully supports the school's educational model and academic plan by strategically allocating resources to ensure exceptional learning outcomes while maintaining financial sustainability. The budget aligns with our mission to provide scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career exploration begin in Kindergarten.

We also recognize concerns about enrollment risks and potential market saturation, given the presence of two public charter schools currently operating in our targeted community, as well as the possibility of a fourth charter school entering the same area with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in August 2026. Accordingly, our financial model is intentionally conservative and built to withstand enrollment fluctuations. It ensures fiscal sustainability even if enrollment falls 25% below our Year 1 target of 192 scholars, equating to 144 enrolled scholars (see Figure 61). While a 35% shortfall would present a more significant challenge, our model includes cost-containment measures and aggressive fundraising strategies to maintain operational viability without compromising educational quality (see Figure 62).

Our model also includes key differentiators that make Novus SMART Academy more accessible and attractive to families, particularly our inclusion of transportation services, an offering not currently provided by other charter schools authorized by Rutherford County Schools. This commitment helps remove a major barrier for families and strengthens our value proposition within the broader school choice ecosystem.

Through structured collaboration with Dr. McCann, Coordinator of Choice and Charter Schools at Rutherford County Schools, we are open to engaging in strategic conversations around purposeful school siting. These discussions would be guided by data on projected population growth across Rutherford County and aim to ensure thoughtful placement of our school campus. Rather than contributing to charter oversaturation in the cities of La Vergne and Smyrna, this collaborative siting strategy would focus on emerging communities where demand for educational options remains unmet. This intentional planning approach enables us to meet families where they are, respond to evolving demographic trends, and support Rutherford County Schools' broader goals for educational access and quality, while complementing, rather than competing with, existing school choice offerings.

While annual enrollment numbers are critical due to their direct influence on public funding through the TISA base rate, weighted funding, and other federal, state, and local sources, our budget is designed to absorb minor fluctuations. As illustrated in Figure 61, we have identified clear minimum enrollment thresholds for sustainable operation and included contingency plans to address any potential revenue shifts.

Figure 61 - Targeted and Minimal Enrollment for Sustainable Operation

School Year	Grade Levels	Targeted Enrollment at 100%	Enrollment 25% Below (operational)	Enrollment 35% Below (critical condition)
Year 1	K-1	192 (8 staffed classrooms)	144 (6 staffed classrooms)	125 (6 staffed classrooms)
Year 2	K-2	288 (12 staffed classrooms)	216 (9 staffed classrooms)	183 (8 staffed classrooms)
Year 3	K-3	384 (16 staffed classrooms)	288 (12 staffed classrooms)	250 (11 staffed classrooms)
Year 4	K-4	480 (20 staffed classrooms)	360 (15 staffed classrooms)	312 (13 staffed classrooms)
Year 5	K-5	576 (24 staffed classrooms)	432 (18 staffed classrooms)	375 (16 staffed classrooms)

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Enrolling 96 scholars in each grade level with 24 scholars in each classroom will enable us to achieve our desired two-educator classroom model with a ratio of 1 educator to 12 scholars. This ensures scholars receive personalized support during whole-class instruction, small group learning, and blended learning. The proposed budget has been carefully designed to maintain this ratio while expanding grade levels, ensuring the same high level of support for all scholars. Our budget prioritizes the resources needed to fulfill our SMART-integrated academic model, which incorporates College and Career Exploration, Character Education, and Structured English Immersion for English language learners through Asset-Based Learning (ABL), Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL), and Project-Based Learning (PBL) across all content as follows:

- **Staffing**: Allocating funds for a strategic two-educator model, enabling personalized instruction, targeted interventions, and rigorous curricula delivery.
- **Curricula and Resources**: Providing high-quality, standards-aligned curricula in Science, Math, Arts, Research and Technology to develop critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.
- **Professional Development**: Investing in training for educators and school leaders to implement research-based instructional strategies effectively.
- **Facilities and Operations**: Ensuring safe, supportive learning environments that foster academic excellence and character development.

Year 0 will focus on pre-operational investments to prepare for a successful launch in August 2026, including facilities preparation, staff recruitment, and professional learning and development. In Year 1, we will serve 192 scholars with the necessary staffing, instructional resources, and professional development to ensure a strong foundation for scholars, families, and staff. As enrollment grows to 576 scholars and families by Year 5 in grades K-5, our budget ensures scalability while maintaining high-quality academic instruction and support services. The gradual increase in enrollment allows for proportional scaling of expenses, ensuring that each scholar benefits from robust academic programming and character development initiatives. This careful alignment of resources with enrollment ensures that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) remains true to its mission of producing global achievers and closing the achievement gap, while meeting the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-13-104 to improve learning outcomes across all content.

Negative Impacts. While the proposed plan provides a solid foundation for Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s operations, several potential negative impacts may arise. Proactively identifying these risks allows us to develop contingency plans to mitigate their effects. With the following measures in place, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will navigate potential challenges while maintaining its commitment to providing an extraordinary learning experience for scholars and families (see Figure 62):

Figure 62 - Negative Impacts and Plans to Mitigate

Negative Impacts	Plans to Mitigate
Lower-Than-Projected Enrollment. *A shortfall in enrollment would directly reduce funding, leading to potential budget deficits. Consequently, fixed costs like salaries, facilities, and operations, might become unsustainable if enrollment targets aren't met.*	• **Early Recruitment Efforts**: Launch aggressive marketing and outreach campaigns to build a strong applicant pipeline before Year 1. • **Contingency Budget**: Develop a flexible budget with conservative revenue assumptions and a contingency reserve for shortfalls. • **Scalable Hiring**: Hire staff in phases, scaling based on confirmed enrollment rather than projections.
Higher Initial Operational Costs. Pre-operational costs for facilities preparation, recruitment, and training may exceed projections, which could strain cash flow and reduce funds available for Year 1 operations.	• **Detailed Cost Analysis**: Conduct thorough pre-operational planning to ensure cost estimates are accurate. • **Grants and Fundraising**: Pursue additional startup grants or philanthropic funding to offset Year 0 expenses. • **Prioritized Spending**: Delay non-essential purchases until after initial enrollment is confirmed (i.e., non-critical furniture, advanced technology beyond operational needs, non-essential classroom supplies, specialty equipment not required for core programming).
Difficulty Retaining High-Quality Staff. High turnover rates among educators and leaders could disrupt academic continuity and increase recruitment costs. This could lead to staff dissatisfaction with workload,	• **Competitive Salaries**: Benchmark compensation against similar schools to remain competitive.

and/or compensation could impact staff morale and scholar achievement outcomes.	• **Strong Onboarding and Development**: Invest in professional development and mentorship programs to support staff growth. • **Retention Bonuses**: As a result of securing additional philanthropic funding, we can offer financial incentives for multi-year commitments from key staff as we develop over time.
Insufficient Funding for Key Programs. Limited funding in the early years could compromise the implementation of our two-educator classroom model and/or other academic priorities.	• **Phase-In Programs**: Focus on core priorities in Year 1 and gradually introduce other initiatives. • **Leverage Partnerships**: Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses, and educational nonprofits to supplement resources. • **Grant Writing**: Actively pursue grants and in-kind donations for technology, curriculum development, and professional learning.
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Challenges. Lack of consistent community support could hinder enrollment and retention. Families may feel disconnected from the school, impacting scholar engagement and satisfaction.	• **Dedicated Engagement Team**: Assign team members to focus solely on building relationships with families and community stakeholders. • **Ongoing Communication**: Use newsletters, events, and social media to maintain regular communication with families. • **Feedback Mechanisms**: Implement surveys and focus groups to gather input and address concerns proactively.
Delayed Facility Readiness or Costs Overruns. Delays in securing or preparing facilities could disrupt the opening timeline. Unanticipated expenses for renovations or compliance could strain the budget.	• **Early Start**: Begin facility preparations well in advance of the opening date to allow for unforeseen delays. • **Professional Expertise**: Engage experienced project managers and real estate consultants to oversee the process. • **Flexible Space Options**: Secure backup options to ensure operations are not disrupted.
Over-Reliance on Public Funding. Fluctuations in local, state or federal funding levels could impact long-term sustainability. Dependence on enrollment-driven revenue may leave little room for error.	• **Diversify Revenue Streams**: Develop a robust fundraising strategy, including private donations and sponsorships. • **Advocacy Efforts**: Engage with policymakers to advocate for stable and adequate start up and facilities funding. • **Efficient Operations**: Regularly review expenditures to identify opportunities for cost savings.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed strategic mitigation plans to navigate various financial scenarios. Given the risks inherent in launching a new school, we have proactively explored multiple Year 1 enrollment scenarios to ensure financial viability, even in the event of lower-than-projected enrollment. Our budget has been designed conservatively to support the school's core academic and programmatic elements, allowing us to operate effectively at 75% of target enrollment. However, falling below projected enrollment would result in thin financial margins. To safeguard the school's financial health while maintaining the integrity of its educational mission, we have identified specific cost reductions that can be implemented if needed.

One of the primary adjustments involves modifying our enrollment plan. Instead of enrolling 96 scholars per grade level, with four classrooms of 24 scholars each, we would enroll 72 scholars per grade level, maintaining the class size of 24 students but reducing the total number of classrooms to three classrooms. This adjustment allows for a controlled reduction in staffing while preserving the student experience. Consequently, the most significant cost savings would come from personnel reductions, totaling $258,600. This includes eliminating two Licensed Teacher positions and two Teacher-in-Residence roles, ensuring that staffing levels align with enrollment while maintaining instructional quality.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Additional reductions would be made in contracted services, with a $12,844 decrease by scaling back expenditures on student and staff gifts and awards, uniform vouchers, evaluation and testing, and payments related to the school's breakfast and lunch programs. Further cost adjustments would come from supplies and materials, with $49,920 in savings achieved through reductions in student and faculty laptops, office supplies, instructional materials, and library books and media. Additionally, capital expenditures would be adjusted to reflect lower enrollment numbers, reducing student furniture purchases by $16,400.

In total, these adjustments represent a base budget reduction of $337,764. By implementing these measures, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) ensures financial sustainability while preserving the essential components of its educational model. These proactive planning efforts reflect our commitment to maintaining a high-quality academic experience, regardless of enrollment fluctuations, and demonstrate our dedication to responsible fiscal management in the critical first year of operation.

Section 3.2b: Outline all revenue assumptions and explain specifically how these assumptions were determined. If the operating budget includes grants, fundraising, or philanthropic revenue, provide a detailed explanation for how the revenue amounts were determined, and whether the funds have been awarded or are estimates. If the funds have not been awarded, the narrative should disclose where they are in the process, the timing of when these funds will be awarded, and a contingency plan should the funds not be realized.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s financial plan is built on a diversified revenue strategy, relying on enrollment-driven public funding, grants, philanthropic contributions, and private donations. Each revenue source is carefully analyzed to ensure sustainability, with contingency plans in place to address potential shortfalls.

As part of the public charter school application process last year, our operating budget was submitted using projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues. However, recent guidance from the Tennessee Department of Education modified the expectations during this year's charter application process. On January 15th, our Finance Committee reached out to Christie Williams, Manager of Charter Schools at the Tennessee Department of Education, to clarify how the updated directions- removing federal passthrough revenues from the budget template- impacts the accuracy and representation of our financial model. The Finance Committee posed a critical question: How can sponsors present a budget that accurately reflects their financial model without including essential projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, such as Title programs, E-Rate, Special Education Funding, and NSLP reimbursements? These revenue streams are vital to our funding projections and directly influence the feasibility of our operational plan. In response, Christie Williams explained:

> "We removed all passthrough revenue to simplify application process and operating budget template for sponsors. The excel template that the sponsor uses to apply to start a charter school is not a budgeting tool or artifact/document that an authorizer should use as the charter's final budget. Our goal was to remove any guesswork from the operating budget template and application process so sponsors could accurately present facts within their application and not rely on assumptions. Sponsors should articulate their "financial model and the true scope of our funding needs" in the budget narrative portion of the application rather than in the Operating Budget Template."

Our Finance Committee also raised concerns regarding the alignment of funding categorizations with best practices, particularly the challenges of including funding classified as "in-process" or "in-planning" when not all authorizers account for these in evaluations. To address this, the Finance Committee asked how excluding these funding sources supports sponsors in achieving success during the authorization process. Christie Williams clarified:

> "Requirement "b" within section 3.1 and requirement "d" within section 3.2 of the charter creation application requirements document requires sponsors to include all anticipated funding sources which can include both secured and anticipated grants. It is important for sponsors to note which grants are secured and provide evidence that anticipated grants will be awarded."

Christie Williams further advised that the operating budget template and narrative work together to highlight the complexities of our financial model. Sponsors may include anticipated grants within the template, supported by detailed explanations in the narrative. For example, she recommended adding the SRO grant to the revenues sheet in the operating budget template and specifying how contracted services will be funded in the narrative. This exchange underscores the importance of accurately representing the financial model while adhering to application guidelines. With that said, the following chart details our critical projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, which remain a cornerstone of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s funding strategy (See Figure 63).

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Figure 63 - Estimated Funding Sources and Methodology

Estimated Funding Sources	Year 1 192 scholars	Year 2 288 scholars	Year 3 384 scholars	Year 4 480 scholars	Year 5 576 scholars
TISA Base	$2,020,336.34	$3,030.504.51	$4,040,672,69	$5,050,840.86	$6,061,009.03
TISA Weight Economically Disadvantaged	$355,137.41	$531,390.80	$707,644.18	$883,897.56	$1,060,150.94
TISA Weight Students with Disabilities	$75,762.65	$113,643.97	$151,525.30	$189,406.62	$227,287.94
TISA Weight English Language Learners	$246,754.74	$371,973.56	$493,509.47	$618,728.29	$743,947.11
TISA Direct Grades K-3 Literacy Support	$96,000	$144,000	$192,000	$192,000	$192,000
TISA Direct Grade 4 Tutoring	N/A	N/A	N/A	$48,000	$48,000
Title I	$67,500	$101,000	$134,500	$168,000	$201,500
Title II	$9,600	$14,400	$19,200	$24,000	$28,800
Title III English Language Learners	$16,750	$25,250	$33,500	$42,000	$50,500
E-Rate	$20,655	$30,906	$41,157	$51,408	$61,659
Special Education Funding	$72,000	$108,000	$144,000	$180,000	$216,000
NSLP Reimbursement	$133,650	$199,980	$266,310	$332,640	$398,970
Grand Total	$1,093,809.80	$1,640,544.33	$2,183,345.95	$2,730,080.47	$3,228,814.99
Methodology	The TISA Base allocates $10,522.59 per scholar enrolled.				
	The TISA Weight allocations are calculated based on the total number of scholars who are categorized as Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners. The population percentages are based on the average demographics of schools located in Laverne and Smyrna. Calculations are as follows: • TISA Base x 25% (Economically Disadvantaged) x # of scholars identified (70%) per school year. ○ Year 1: 135 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 25% x 135 students = $355,137.41) ○ Year 2: 202 scholars = $531,390.80 ○ Year 3: 269 scholars = $707,644.18 ○ Year 4: 336 scholars = $883.897.56 ○ Year 5: 403 scholars = $1,060,150.94 • TISA Base x 15% (Students with Disabilities) x # of scholars identified (25%) per school year.				

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

- Year 1: 48 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 15% x 48 students = $75,762.65)
- Year 2: 72 scholars = $113,643.97
- Year 3: 96 scholars = $151,525.30
- Year 4: 120 scholars = $189,406.62
- Year 5: 144 scholars = $227,287.94

- TISA Base x 20% (English Language Learners) x # of scholars identified (35%) per school year.
  - Year 1: 67 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 35% x 67 students = $246,754.74)
  - Year 2: 101 scholars = $371,973.56
  - Year 3: 134 scholars = $493,509.47
  - Year 4: 168 scholars = $618,728.29
  - Year 5: 202 scholars = $743,947.11

TISA Direct

- $500 per scholar for Literacy support in Grades Kindergarten through Grade 3 per school each year enrolled.
  - Year 1: 192 scholars ($500 x 192 scholars = $96,000)
  - Year 2: 288 scholars = $144,000
  - Year 3: 384 scholars = $192,000
  - Year 4: 384 scholars = $192,000
  - Year 5: 384 scholars = $192,000
- $500 per scholar for tutoring support in Grade 4 per school each year enrolled.
  - Year 1: N/A
  - Year 2: N/A
  - Year 3: N/A
  - Year 4 (Grade 4 only): 96 scholars = $48,000
  - Year 5 (Grade 4 only): 96 scholars = $48,000

- Title I Funding is $500 per scholar each year and categorized as Economically Disadvantaged as follows:
  - Year 1: 135 scholars ($500 x 135 scholars = $67,500)
  - Year 2: 202 scholars = $101,000
  - Year 3: 269 scholars = $134,500
  - Year 4: 336 scholars = $168,000
  - Year 5: 403 scholars = $201,500
- Title II Funding is $50 per scholar each year enrolled.
  - Year 1: 192 scholars ($50 x 192 scholars = $9,600)
  - Year 2: 288 scholars = $14,400
  - Year 3: 384 scholars = $19,200
  - Year 4: 480 scholars = $24,000
  - Year 5: 576 scholars = $28,800
- Title III Funding is $250 per scholar each year enrolled and categorized as an English Language Learner as follows:
  - Year 1: 67 scholars ($250 x 67 scholars = $16,750)
  - Year 2: 101 scholars = $25,250
  - Year 3: 134 scholars = $33,500
  - Year 4: 168 scholars = $42,000
  - Year 5: 202 scholars = $50,500
- E-Rate Funding is 40% for Category 1 (Internet Access & Data Transmission) and 35% for Category 2 (Internal Connections & Network Equipment) based on 70% NSLP eligibility through the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).
- Special Education Funding is $1500 per scholar each year enrolled and categorized as a Student with Disabilities as follows:
  - Year 1: 48 scholars ($1500 x 48 scholars = $72,000)
  - Year 2: 72 scholars = $108,000
  - Year 3: 96 scholars = $144,000
  - Year 4: 120 scholars = $180,000
  - Year 5: 144 scholars = $216,000
- Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring that 100% of our students receive free breakfast and lunch daily. While we will receive National School Lunch Program (NSLP) reimbursement for approximately 70% of our student population—at a rate of

	$5.50 per day per eligible scholar ($2.00 for breakfast and $3.50 for lunch)—we are dedicated to covering the remaining costs to guarantee that every student has access to nutritious meals, regardless of economic status. ○ Year 1: 135 scholars ($5.50 x 180 days x 135 scholars = $133,650) ○ Year 2: 202 scholars = $199.980 ○ Year 3: 269 scholars = $266,310 ○ Year 4: 336 scholars = $332,640 ○ Year 5: 403 scholars = $398,970
Contingency Plan	• Should we have lower-than-expected revenues through TISA Weight and/or Direct funding and/or federal passthrough funding, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize essential expenditures, such as staffing and instructional materials, and identify potential cuts and savings. • We will also consider a short-term loan or line of credit as a contingency for cash flow management during startup years. • To mitigate risk of overestimating TISA Weight and/or Direct funding and/or federal passthrough funding, particularly in year 1 as a new school, we will revise our budget with updated projections for per pupil funding and student counts during the spring of 2026 to ensure a proactive plan to operate conservatively within available funding boundaries.

While Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has established contingency plans to address potential funding shortfalls, the inclusion of projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues provides a more accurate and comprehensive perspective on our operating budget for Years 0 through 5. These revenues are essential to reflecting the full scope of our financial model and projected operations. Without these funding streams, our operating budget underrepresents the true fiscal capacity required to deliver our high-quality educational program to adequately support our students, particularly those from underserved communities or within our special education program. Including these revenues in our projections demonstrates a more realistic portrayal of our financial health, revealing sustainable ending fund balances in each year of operation. These balances serve as critical indicators of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s ability to maintain operational stability, meet unforeseen expenses, and invest strategically in long-term goals. Our projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues not only validate the viability of our financial plan but also highlight our commitment to fiscal responsibility and programmatic excellence. Aside from critical projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, we are thrilled to share that we have secured and applied for several grant opportunities as follows (Figure 64):

Figure 64 - Secured and Applied For Grants

Organization and/or Grant Name	Amount Available	Funding Status & Assumptions
BES Startup Grant	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 0. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
Building Hope	$250,000	Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Charter School Growth Fund	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
CSF Grant	$500,000	TNDOE Charter Schools Facilities (CSF) Grant with a maximum reward of $500,000 based on the number of applications, specific needs identified by project, total funds available, and competitive score. Can apply post-authorization.
CSP Startup Grant	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
NewSchools Venture Fund	$250,000	Applied and will receive first notification of application status in March 2025.

Z Combinator	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 1. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
School Resource Officer Grant	$75,000	The Statewide School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Grant provides funding to local law enforcement entities to place one full-time, POST-certified SRO in each K-12 public school and public charter school in Tennessee. Local law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply for funding not to exceed $75,000 per year, per SRO, per school for which they are responsible for providing SRO services. SROs provide the crucial link between schools and law enforcement agencies in their continued efforts to establish and maintain safe and secure learning environments. An SRO acts as a liaison between the police, the school, and the community. As part of their day-to-day operations, SROs are responsible for responding to all criminal acts committed at the school. Most of an SRO's time is spent interacting with youth. An SRO should connect with students, develop beneficial and enriching relationships, and have a positive effect on the school's overall climate. The duties of SROs include monitoring those who visit schools, providing assistance for disruptive students, and enforcing applicable laws. Can apply post-authorization.
Contingency Plan	• Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has secured $515,000 in startup funding for Year 0 and is pursuing an additional $1,000,000 in startup funding. As shown in the budget, Year 0 has an ending fund balance of over $200,000. However, if we are not able to secure all the grants, we will cut or defer planned expenditures tied to these funds that will not impact our academic program. These cuts may include, but are not limited to, personnel services and employee benefits, contracted services, supplies and materials, and capital outlay expenditures that do not violate compliance with county and/or municipal building code requirements. • To fill the gap in funding, our Development Committee will pursue additional grant opportunities and cultivate donor relationships. • We will incorporate a conservative estimate of funds raised (e.g., assume 75% of projected totals) and build partnerships with local businesses to supplement donations through in-kind contributions if monetary goals are not met. • We will also identify alternative vendors who can provide the needed goods or services, or use public funding, such as government grants or other financial resources, to fill gaps if in-kind contributions are delayed or unavailable.	

Section 3.2c: If applicable, list all donations of private funding, including, but not limited to, gifts received from foreign governments, foreign legal entities and, when reasonably known, domestic entities affiliated with either foreign governments or foreign legal entities.

Not Applicable

Section 3.2d: Specify the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Please note which are already secured and which are anticipated. Include evidence of firm commitments where applicable.

Figure 65 - Secured and Applied For Grants

Organization and/or Grant Name	Amount Available	Funding Status & Assumptions
BES Startup Grant	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 0. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
Building Hope	$250,000	Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Charter School Growth Fund	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative (Required for All Sponsors)		
CSF Grant	$500,000	TNDOE Charter Schools Facilities (CSF) Grant with a maximum reward of $500,000 based on the number of applications, specific needs identified by project, total funds available, and competitive score. Can apply post-authorization.
CSP Startup Grant	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
NewSchools Venture Fund	$250,000	Applied and will receive first notification of application status in March 2025.
Z Combinator	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 1. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
School Resource Officer Grant	$75,000	The Statewide School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Grant provides funding to local law enforcement entities to place one full-time, POST-certified SRO in each K-12 public school and public charter school in Tennessee. Local law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply for funding not to exceed $75,000 per year, per SRO, per school for which they are responsible for providing SRO services. SROs provide the crucial link between schools and law enforcement agencies in their continued efforts to establish and maintain safe and secure learning environments. An SRO acts as a liaison between the police, the school, and the community. As part of their day-to-day operations, SROs are responsible for responding to all criminal acts committed at the school. Most of an SRO's time is spent interacting with youth. An SRO should connect with students, develop beneficial and enriching relationships, and have a positive effect on the school's overall climate. The duties of SROs include monitoring those who visit schools, providing assistance for disruptive students, and enforcing applicable laws. Can apply post-authorization.
Contingency Plan	• Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has secured $515,000 in startup funding for Year 0 and is pursuing an additional $1,000,000 in startup funding. As shown in the budget, Year 0 has an ending fund balance of over $200,000. However, if we are not able to secure all the grants, we will cut or defer planned expenditures tied to these funds that will not impact our academic program. These cuts may include, but are not limited to, personnel services and employee benefits, contracted services, supplies and materials, and capital outlay expenditures that do not violate compliance with county and/or municipal building code requirements. • To fill the gap in funding, our Development Committee will pursue additional grant opportunities and cultivate donor relationships. • We will incorporate a conservative estimate of funds raised (e.g., assume 75% of projected totals) and build partnerships with local businesses to supplement donations through in-kind contributions if monetary goals are not met. • We will also identify alternative vendors who can provide the needed goods or services, or use public funding, such as government grants or other financial resources, to fill gaps if in-kind contributions are delayed or unavailable.	

Section 3.2e: Provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the anticipated expenditures included in Section 3.1 of this application.

To determine the anticipated expenditures for Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we employed a conservative budgeting approach beginning in Year 0. This method ensured that all 53 expenditures listed below were carefully justified based on projected needs to align with our school model and design (Figure 7). Our process was structured into four key phases: identifying expense categories, collecting data and making assumptions, calculating costs, and validating the budget through rigorous review.

First, we identified the primary expenditure categories essential to successfully open and operate in Year 1 and beyond. These categories included personnel services, employee benefits, contracted services supplies and materials, other charges (i.e., liability insurance, professional development, and gifts and awards for students, teachers, and staff), debt service, and capital outlay. Once we established these categories, we gathered data to ensure that our projections were grounded in realistic market conditions. Salaries were benchmarked against compensation data from local school districts and charter networks to remain competitive in attracting high-quality educators and staff. Facility costs were estimated through comprehensive market research of commercial lease rates within our target area. Instructional material costs were projected using per-student expenditure estimates aligned with both state and national guidelines. With these data points in

place, we moved on to cost calculations. Each expenditure category was estimated using a combination of vendor quotes, historical data from comparable charter schools, and established best-practice benchmarks.

Finally, the anticipated expenditures underwent a thorough validation and review process. The finance team meticulously examined each estimate, comparing them against industry standards and best practices. Furthermore, the Board of Directors, particularly Daniel Kadeba with expertise in finance, provided oversight and constructive feedback to refine and optimize our budget. This multi-layered approach ensured that the financial projections in Section 3.1 of this application were both precise and aligned with the long-term sustainability of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Figure 66 - Expenditures

Personnel Services (10 expenditures)	
Teacher in Residence	Code 71100 163 • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 1 (9.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 2 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 9.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 3 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 9.0 FTE on STEP 4). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 4 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 4.0 FTE on STEP 4; 9.0 FTE on STEP 5). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 5 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 4.0 FTE on STEP 4; 4.0 FTE on STEP 5; 9.0 FTE on STEP 6).
Licensed Teacher	Code 71100 116 • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 for Teachers in Year 1 (13.0 FTE up to STEP 2). Gifted Teacher will be 0.5 PTE in Year 1. • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 2 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 14.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 3 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 14.0 FTE on STEP 4). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 4 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 7.0 FTE on STEP 4; 14.0 FTE on STEP 5). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual for Teachers in Year 5 (6.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 7.0 FTE on STEP 4; 7.0 FTE on STEP 5; 14.0 FTE on STEP 6).
Licensed School Counselor	Code 72130 123 • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 for School Counselor in Year 1 (1.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 2 (1.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 3 (1.0 FTE on STEP 4; 1.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 4 (1.0 FTE on STEP 5; 1.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 5 (1.0 FTE on STEP 6; 1.0 FTE on STEP 4).
Assistant Principals	Code 72410 139 • Assumes base salary up to $81,151.20 with 2% annual increase for AP of Operations and Finance in Years 0-1 (0.50 FTE status in Year 0 from January to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5).

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative (Required for All Sponsors)	
	• Assumes base salary up to $78,030 for AP of Scholar Access in Years 0-1 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 for AP of School Culture and Community Engagement in Years 0-5 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 with 2% annual increase for K-2 Assistant Principal in Years 2-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 with 2% annual increase for 3-5 Assistant Principal in Years 3-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 3-5).
Proposed Executive Director & School Principal	Code 72410 104: Assumes salary of $85k for Proposed Executive Director/Founding School Principal in Year 0 (1.0 FTE status in Year 0; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 with base salary of $108k on Step 0; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5).
Office Manager	Code 72410 119: Assumes salary of $45k for Office Manager in Years 0-1 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 0; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 0; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5).
Office Secretary	Code 72410 161: Assumes base salary of $35k with 2% annual increase for School Receptionist in Years 1-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 1-5).
School Resource Officer	Code 72130 170: Assumes salary of $75k for School Resource Officer (1.0 FTE in Years 1-2 and 2.0 FTE in Years 3-5).
Part-time After School Program Staff & Summer School Staff	Code 73300 169: Assumes $20 per hour for after school program Staff on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday, and Fridays from 3:30 PM to 6:00 PM, and on Wednesdays from 1:30 PM to 6:00 PM, to support dismissal and transition to the after-school program (1.0 PTE in Year 1; 2 PTE in Years 2-3; and 3.0 PTE in Years 4-5); only eligible for Unemployment Compensation. Beginning in Year 3, assumes $25 per hour for two Summer School Licensed Teachers from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Mondays thru Fridays for 20 days in June. Beginning Year 3, assumes $15 per hour for two Summer School Teachers-in-Residence from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Mondays thru Fridays for 20 days in June.
Performance-based Incentives	<up to $3,000> EOY Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 3 with Grade 3. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with “Met Expectations” or “Exceeded Expectations” performance levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $600 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,800); $1,800 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $300 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $900). $900 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with Level 3 (evidence that the students made growth as expected), Level 4 (moderate evidence that the students made more growth than expected), and/or Level 5 (significant evidence that the students made more growth than expected) effectiveness levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $400 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,200). $1,200 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $200 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $600). $600 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. <up to $3,000> English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21):

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative (Required for All Sponsors)	
	• 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with a qualifying score for exit of 4 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening. • Assumes $1,800 for Licensed ESL Teachers with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $900 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet/exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with the following scores: only one 2 and/or two or more scores of 3 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening; an overall proficiency level of Progressing. • Assumes $1,200 for Licensed ESL Teacher with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $600 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5. <up to $2,500> EOY NWEA MAP Assessments • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1. Achievement (shows how scholars are performing compared to their current grade-level peers): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected RIT Score as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science. • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $375 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,500). $1,500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $187.50 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $750). $750 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth (shows how much growth scholars have experienced since the previous assessments, regardless of whether they are performing at grade level or not): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected Growth as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science. • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $250 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,000). $1,000 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $125 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $500). $500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. < $1500> Retention Bonus with 95% Attendance Rate to be paid annually in October of the upcoming school year. Assumes 5.0 FTE Founding Staff Members to be paid in October Year 1 for Year 0 returners; 30.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 2 for Year 1 returners; 43.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 3 for Year 2 returners; 68.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 4 for Year 3 returners; and 78.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 5 for Year 4 returners.
Employee Benefits (9 expenditures)	

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative (Required for All Sponsors)	
Employee Benefits (see Tab 4 on **Attachment W** for more details)	• Code 71100 201: Assumes 6.20% of all wages for Social Security • Code 71100 204: TCRS Legacy assumes 9% of all wages for 15% of FTE. • Code 71100 206: Assumes 0.1% of all wages for Life Insurance. • Code 71100 207: Assumes $5500 per FTE for medical insurance (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5). • Code 71100 208: Assumes $375 per FTE for dental and vision insurance (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5). • Code 71100 210: Assumes $400 per FTE for unemployment compensation (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5). Assumes $200 per PTE for unemployment compensation (1.0 PTE in Year 1; 2.0 PTE in Year 2; 6.0 PTE in Year 3; 7.0 PTE in Years 4-5). • Code 71100 211: Empower Local Retirement assumes 9% of all wages for 50% of FTE. • Code 71100 212: Assumes 1.45% of all wages for Employer Medicare. • Code 71100 217: TCRS Hybrid assumes 9% of all wages for 35% of FTE.
Contracted Services (21 expenditures)	
Advertising	Code 72520 302 • Assumes $5k in Year 0 for Student and Staff Recruitment (i.e., social media, community events, travel, school swag, etc.). • Assumes $10k in Years 1-5 for Student and Staff Recruitment (i.e., social media, community events, travel, school swag, etc.). • Assumes $1500 in Years 0-5 for Parent & Staff Meetings. • Assumes $5k in Year 0 and $4k in Years 1-5 for Marketing & Advertising with GrowthFuel Marketing in Connection with EdConnect. • Assumes $30 per new student for uniform voucher (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Architect	Code 91300 304: Assumes $5k for 2 feasibility studies for proposed facilities options with Ethan Levin.
Audit Services	Code 72310 305 • Assumes $2k in Year 0 for 990 Services. • Assumes $17k in Years 1-5 for Auditing Services ($15k) and 990 Services ($2k).
Consultants	Code 72210 308 • Assumes $15k in Years 0-2 for BES Follow-on Support. • Assumes $10,995 in Years 0-5 for BoardOnTrack services.
Data Processing Services	Code 72110 317 • Assumes $52,575 in Year 0 for PowerSchool SIS license and subscription fees, professional services and setup fees, and training services. • Assumes $18,585 in Years 1-5 for PowerSchool SIS license and subscription fees and the Unified Operations Enrollment and Lottery System.
Dues & Memberships	Code 72510 320: Assumes $0 per month for currently-open Horizon 75 Business Checking Account with Pinnacle Financial Partners
Evaluation & Testing	Code 72130 322: Assumes $200 per student for assessments and Blended Learning with FastBridge, Progress Learning, NWEA MAP, IXL, and Imagine MyPath for ELL.
Janitorial Services	Code 72610 328: Assumes $0.15 per square foot per month for Custodial Services, including all materials, with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0); 14,375 sf in Year 2; 20,000 sf in Year 3; 25,750 sf in Year 4; and 28,750 sf in Year 5.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative (Required for All Sponsors)	
Legal Services	Code 72310 331: Assumes $3750 in Year 0 for potential legal fees. Assumes $7500 in Years 1-5 for potential legal fees.
Maintenance & Repair Services Building	Code 72620 335: Assumes $3 per square foot for Maintenance & Repair Services, including materials and equipment, with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0); 14,375 sf in Year 2; 20,000 sf in Year 3; 25,750 sf in Year 4; and 28,750 sf in Year 5.
Medical and Dental Services	Code 72710 340: Assumes $4k per month from August to May in Years 1-5 for School Nurse contracted services.
Payments to Schools-Breakfast	Code 73100 342: Assumes $2 per day (180 days) for breakfast per scholar enrolled (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).
Payments to Schools-Lunch	Code 73100 343: Assumes $3.50 per day (180 days) for lunch per scholar enrolled (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).
Postal Charges	Code 72110 348: Assumes $5 per scholar for postal charges with 192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5.
Internet Connectivity	Code 72250 350 • Assumes $300 in Year 0 for Technology Lab new school consulting. • Assumes $3k in Year 0 for Technology Lab onboarding fee. • Assumes $118.80 per employee for managed services with Technology Lab (5.0 FTE in Year 0; 30.5 FTE in Year 1; 43 in Year 2; 57 in Year 3; 68 in Year 4; 78 in Year 5). Assumes $9k in Years 1-5 for Internet and Phone Services. • Assumes $6k for Internet Services in Year 0 and $12k in Years 1-5 respectively.
Rentals	Code 72610 351: Assumes $20 per square foot for Rent per year with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0), 14,375 sf in Year 2, 20,000 sf in Year 3, 25,750 sf in Year 4, and 28,750 sf in Year 5).
Travel	Code 72210 355: Assumes 2 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $482.01 per day for 180 days in Year 1 with 70% participation (135 students; buses total: $260,287.02). Assumes 3 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $501.29 per day for 180 days in Year 2 with 70% participation (202 students; buses total: $360,931.33). Assumes 4 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $521.35 per day for 180 days in Year 3 with 70% participation (269 students; buses total: $469,210.73). Assumes 5 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $542.20 per day for 180 days in Year 4 with 70% participation (336 students; buses total: $585,575.00). Assumes 6 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $563.89 per day for 180 days in Year 5 with 70% participation (403 students; buses total: $710,497.66). Assumes $4000 per grade level for annual field trips and after-school activities (will conduct the RFP vendor process).
Disposal Fees	Code 72610 359: Assumes $200 per month for waste disposal (3 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5).
Contracts for Substitute Teachers Certified	Code 71100 369: Assumes $150 per day (10 days) for Certified Substitute Teachers in the place of General Education Teachers (8 in Year 1; 12 in Year 2; 16 in Year 3; 20 in Year 4; 24 in Year 5).
Contracts for Substitute Teachers Non-Certified	Code 71100 370: Assumes $75 per day (10 days) for Certified Substitute Teachers in the place of General Education Teachers (8 in Year 1; 12 in Year 2; 16 in Year 3; 20 in Year 4; 24 in Year 5).
Other Contracted Services	• Code 72510 399: Assumes $4k per month for Financial Management with EdTec for Reporting & Compliance, Cash Flow Management, Payroll & Retirement, and Business and Advisory (6 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5). • Code 71400 399: Assumes $37k in Year 1; $42,700 in Year 2; $78,550 in Year 3; $102,950 in Year 4; and $148,350 in Year 5 for Special Education Contracted Services with Project Play Therapy.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Supplies & Materials (8 expenditures)	
Drugs & Medical Supplies	Code 72120 413: Assumes $200 per classroom and office space in Years 0-5 for Health Kits (1 in Year 0; 3 in Year 1; 6 in Year 2; 8 in Year 3; 6 in Year 4; 5 in Year 5).
Electricity	Code 72610 415: Assumes $2 per square foot per year for Utilities with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (6 months in Year 0), 14,375 sf in Year 2, 20,000 sf in Year 3, 25,750 sf in Year 4, and 28,750 sf in Year 5).
Instructional Supplies & Materials	Code 71100 429: Assumes $400 per student for curricula resources and consumable materials in ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, RTI2-Academics/Behavior Academic Resources (i.e., Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum for Grades K-5, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180 curriculum for Grades 6-8, and $10k per school year for CharacterStrong), and Related Arts (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Library Books/Media	Code 72210 432: Assumes $20 per new student for classroom libraries (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Office Supplies	Code 72250 435 • Assumes $800 in Years 1-2 for one copier lease and usage. Assumes $1600 in Years 3-5 for two copiers lease and usage. • Assumes $200 per FTE for faculty supplies (5.0 FTE in Year 0; 29 in Year 1; 42 in Year 2; 55 in Year 3; 66 in Year 4; 76 in Year 5; excludes School Resource Officers who will use schoolwide office supplies). • Assumes $5k for schoolwide office supplies in Years 1-5.
Water & Sewer	Code 72610 454: Assumes $200 per month for water and sewer (3 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5).
Cabling	Code 72250 470: Assumes $3500 for average market rate for cabling installation.
Other Supplies and Materials	• Code 71100 499: Assumes $20 per student for printing paper (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5). • Code 72250 499 ○ Assumes $1k per FTE for faculty laptops (5.0 in Year 0; 27.0 in Year 1; 12.0 in Year 2; 14.0 in Year 3; 12.0 in Year 4; 11.0 in Year 5). ○ Assumes $500 per student laptop cart (8 in Year 1; 4 in Years 2-5). Assumes $400 per new student laptop (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Contracted Services (3 expenditures)	
Liability Insurance	Code 72310 506 • Assumes $3750 for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Year 0. • Assumes $7500 per year for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Years 1-5. • Assumes $5k per grade level for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Years 1-5 (K-1 in Year 1; K-2 in Year 2 K-3 in Year 3; K-4 in Year 4; K-5 in Year 5).
In-Service & Staff Development	Code 72210 524: Assumes $2500 in Year 0 and $5k in Years 1-5 and beyond for professional development.
Other Charges	Code 71400 599 • Assumes $25 per FTE for gifts and awards in Years 0-5 (5.0 in Year 0; 32.0 in Year 1; 45.0 in Year 2; 63.0 in Year 3; 75.0 in Year 4; 85.0 in Year 5). • Assumes $25 per student for gifts and awards in Years 1-5 (192 in Year; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Debt Service (1 expenditure)	
Other Debt Service	Code 82330 699: Assumes $35k for authorizer fee in Years 1-5.
Capital Outlay (2 expenditures)	
Building Improvements	Code 76100 707: Assumes $850,000 for Building Improvements in Year 0 to open and operate in Year 1.
Furniture and Fixtures	Code 91300 711 • Assumes $500 per FTE (5.0) for staff furniture in Year 0. • Assumes $300 per student for student furniture (192 in Year 1; 96 in Year 2; 96 in Year 3; 96 in Year 5; 96 in Year 5). • Assumes $500 per FTE for staff furniture in Years 1-5 (27.0 in Year 1; 13.0 in Year 2; 15.0 in Year 3; 13.0 in Year 4; 12.0 in Year 5). • Assumes $2k per classroom for additional equipment (i.e., doc cameras, projectors, etc.) in Years 1-5 (11 in Year 1; 5 in Year 2; 7 in Year 3; 5 in Year 4; 4 in Year 5). • Assumes $5k for building decorum in Years 0-5.

Section 3.2f: Explain how one or more high-needs students with disabilities may affect the operating budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) recognizes the importance of providing high-quality support for scholars with disabilities, including those with high-needs. These needs can have significant financial implications, as costs for accommodations, specialized services, and instructional materials may exceed state and federal funding allocations. By maximizing funding, maintaining contingency plans, and prioritizing efficient service delivery, the school will ensure access to a high-quality education for scholars with disabilities while safeguarding its operational stability.

State and Federal Allocations. The Tennessee Department of Education provides an allocation of approximately $1,500 per scholar with special needs. Depending on the scholar's Individualized Education Program (IEP), expenses can include specialized staff, assistive technology, therapeutic services, and transportation, which may exceed the base funding. Our budget reflects an additional $25k per school year for transportation and additional funding for contracted services that will be provided through Project Play for more specialized student supports. On an as-needed basis, we will hire additional Teachers in Residence for students who require more specialized student supports. Should additional Special Education Teachers and or Teachers in Residence need to be hired, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize hiring additional full-time employees to meet the needs of our scholars.

Unpredictable Federal Funding Disbursements. While federal funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides additional support, delays in disbursement may create temporary cash flow challenges. Services for high-needs scholars, such as one-on-one aides (known as Teachers in Residence), occupational therapy, and adaptive equipment, can require substantial additional resources through our contracted services providers. To support in mitigating these delays, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will ensure accurate and timely reporting of all scholars with disabilities to secure maximum state and federal funding. This verification process will ensure compliance with reporting requirements to avoid delays in allocations. Otherwise, we will pursue additional federal and state grants targeted at special education services.

Contingency Planning for Funding Gaps. To address delays in federal funding, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will utilize short-term financial solutions. As a last resort, we will secure access to a line of credit to cover short-term cash flow gaps caused by delays in federal funding. Interest costs will be minimized by repaying the line of credit promptly upon receipt of federal funds. As we develop over time, we will maintain an operating reserve to buffer unexpected increases in special education costs. Resources will be allocated to high-priority areas, such as direct services and accommodations, before other initiatives. As enrollment grows, the budget will scale to include additional reserves and specialized staff, ensuring sustainability.

Staffing and Resource Allocation. Our current staffing model will be adjusted to meet the needs of scholars with disabilities without compromising financial stability. We will rely heavily on Project Play, our contracted services provider, to provide the specialized services our scholars need. Should scholars require additional services outside of what Project Play has the capacity to offer, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize hiring additional full-time employees to meet the needs of our scholars. EdTec will help us to adopt a flexible staffing approach, ensuring

adequate support while avoiding overstaffing, and we will provide all instructional staff with ongoing professional learning and development to support our scholars appropriately.

Section 3.2g: Describe the systems, processes, and policies by which the proposed school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Include any policies on financial controls.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed robust systems, processes, and policies to manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits while ensuring strict compliance with federal and state regulations. With guidance and support from EdTec, a social enterprise specializing in charter school operations and performance services, the school will implement the following strategies:

Accounting and Financial Management. Our Board Treasurer in partnership with our Finance Committee will oversee financial management and ensure compliance with Tennessee and federal accounting standards. We will also leverage EdTec's expertise to establish comprehensive financial management systems for budgeting, reporting, and cash flow tracking. Together, we will adopt an accrual-based accounting system to provide accurate, real-time financial reporting and align with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Financial Controls. We will implement fiscal control policies to safeguard assets, monitor expenditures, and ensure transparency. EdTec will work with our Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, alongside our Finance Committee, to develop a system of checks and balances that will require dual approvals for all major financial transactions. Monthly financial reports, including profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow analyses, will always be reviewed by the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee.

Purchasing. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring efficient and transparent purchasing processes while maintaining fiscal responsibility. To achieve this, the school will establish a competitive bidding system for significant purchases, ensuring cost-effectiveness and vendor accountability. A purchase order system will be implemented to streamline approvals and monitor spending limits for all goods and services. All expenditures will require thorough documentation, including receipts and invoices, which will undergo a review process by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance. Final approval for such expenditures will rest with the Proposed Executive Director and the Board Treasurer. To further strengthen financial oversight, discretionary spending will be limited, and spending thresholds requiring prior Board approval will be established. Vendor contracts will be periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the school's budgetary goals and quality standards.

When selecting vendors, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will employ a rigorous and competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process for all bids exceeding $15,000. This process will ensure that vendors meet the academy's high standards for quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness. The first step in this process involves establishing clear criteria for vendor selection. These criteria will prioritize safety, reliability, and experience working with charter schools, as well as compliance with state and federal regulations.

Once proposals are submitted, the selection process will involve a thorough evaluation by a committee led by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, with support from the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access. Vendors will be assessed based on key factors such as their safety records, maintenance protocols, compliance with state and federal requirements, capacity to provide specialized transportation, community engagement, customer service track record, and alignment with the academy's budget.

Shortlisted vendors will be invited for interviews and site visits, allowing the committee to gain a deeper understanding of their operations and to verify their compliance with safety protocols and service expectations. After the interviews and site visits, the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will negotiate the contract terms with the selected vendor. These contracts will include comprehensive Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to define performance standards, communication expectations, and reporting requirements. By adhering to this structured and transparent approach, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) ensures that all vendors meet the highest standards while supporting the school's mission and operational goals.

Payroll Management. Payroll services will be managed through EdTec, our back-office services provider, using a secure and compliant payroll system. Our Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with EdTec to ensure timely and accurate disbursement of salaries and benefits, with proper withholding of taxes and retirement contributions. We will adopt written payroll procedures outlining payment schedules, time tracking, and compliance with labor laws, and conduct periodic internal reviews to verify the accuracy of payroll records and prevent discrepancies.

Audit and Compliance. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contract with an independent auditor to conduct an annual financial audit, ensuring compliance with federal and state laws. The Finance Committee will oversee the audit process and ensure that findings and recommendations are addressed promptly. The audit will include a review of internal controls, financial statements, and compliance with Tennessee Department of Education requirements.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Federal and State Reporting. Our Finance Committee will collaborate with EdTec to ensure timely submission of all required financial reports to include quarterly and annual financial reports to the Tennessee Department of Education, federal grant expenditure reports, and IRS Form 990 for nonprofit organizations. We will also publish annual financial audits and reports on the school's website for public review and provide regular financial updates to the Board of Directors to maintain accountability.

Preparation During the Planning Year

- **Board Governance.** The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee will oversee the process of establishing accounts and reviewing fiscal control policies. They will also secure contracts with both EdTec and the auditor to ensure financial readiness. These processes will ensure successful adoption of fiscal policies and procedures to align with state and local requirements.
- **School-based Management.** The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will participate in financial management training provided by EdTec to ensure full compliance and school-based operational readiness.

By implementing these systems and leveraging EdTec's expertise, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain fiscal accountability and transparency, ensuring that financial resources are effectively managed to support its mission and long-term sustainability.

Section 3.2h: Describe how the proposed school will provide an independent annual audit and comply with other federal or state accounting and/or reporting requirements.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to financial transparency, accountability, and compliance with all state and federal regulations. To ensure fiscal integrity, the school will contract an independent auditor to conduct an annual audit in accordance with the Tennessee Department of Education's requirements and applicable federal guidelines. This audit will provide a comprehensive review of the school's financial statements, internal controls, and adherence to legal and regulatory standards.

The independent auditor, licensed by the State of Tennessee and experienced in auditing charter schools, will be selected through a thorough vetting process led by the Finance Committee. The committee will recommend a qualified auditing firm to the Board of Directors for approval. Once engaged, the auditor will conduct a rigorous assessment of the school's financial records, ensuring that all funds, including state allocations and federal grants such as Title I, are utilized appropriately and in compliance with statutory requirements.

EdTec, a financial services provider, will support Novus SMART Academy (K-8) by preparing detailed monthly financial reports. These reports will be reviewed by the Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance before being presented to the Board of Directors. The Board will provide oversight, ensuring that financial operations remain aligned with best practices and regulatory expectations.

Upon completion of the audit, the independent auditor will present a report summarizing the school's financial health, any identified discrepancies, and recommended improvements. The Finance Committee, in collaboration with school leadership, will address any audit findings, implementing corrective measures as necessary to maintain compliance. The final audit report will then be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education and other relevant state agencies, as required by law.

In addition to the annual audit, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to maintain accurate and reliable financial records. The school will comply with all federal and state reporting requirements, ensuring that financial statements, budget reports, and grant expenditures are meticulously documented. By maintaining rigorous financial oversight and proactively addressing any compliance concerns, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will uphold its commitment to responsible financial stewardship, safeguarding the resources entrusted to it in service of its mission to provide a high-quality education to its scholars.

Section 3.2i: Describe the different financial roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's administration and governing board.

In the financial management structure of the proposed Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the administration and governing board will play distinct but complementary roles.

Governing Board. The governing board oversees the school's fiscal health and ensures financial accountability and compliance with legal and ethical standards. Key responsibilities include:

- Strategic Oversight
    - Approve annual budgets and ensure alignment with the school's mission and strategic goals.

  - Monitor long-term financial planning, including contingency plans for funding and enrollment fluctuations.
- Fiscal Policy Setting
  - Develop, review, and approve financial policies and procedures.
- Establish internal controls and appropriate segregation of duties to safeguard assets and prevent misuse of funds.
- Audit and Compliance
  - Oversee annual independent financial audits.
- Ensure compliance with state, federal, and charter-specific financial regulations.
- Monitor adherence to grant and donor requirements.
- Performance Monitoring
  - Review monthly financial reports, including income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements.
- Assess financial benchmarks such as enrollment, fundraising, and expenditure trends.
- Fundraising and Resource Development: Support efforts to secure additional funding through grants, donations, and partnerships.

School Administration. The administration, led by the Proposed Executive Director and supported by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, is responsible for day-to-day financial operations and implementing the governing board's policies. Specific duties include:

- Budget Implementation
  - Prepare draft budgets for governing board approval.
- Manage approved budgets and ensure funds are allocated effectively.
- Operational Financial Management
  - In partnership with EdTec, process payroll, vendor payments, and reimbursements.
- Oversee procurement, ensuring cost-effectiveness and compliance with policies.
- Financial Reporting
  - In partnership with EdTec, generate regular financial reports for the governing board and stakeholders.
  - Track expenditures against budgeted amounts and flag variances.
- Compliance and Record-Keeping
- In partnership with EdTec, maintain accurate financial records for audits and reporting requirements.
- Ensure compliance with tax filings, employee benefits, and vendor agreements.
- Training and Readiness: Participate in financial management training (e.g., provided by EdTec) to ensure operational readiness and adherence to best practices.
- Resource Allocation: Support decision-making on staffing, facilities, and instructional resources based on financial data and strategic priorities.

Collaboration Between Governing Board and Administration. The Governing Board of Directors and Proposed Executive Director will work collaboratively to execute healthy financial decisions. Regular communication, reporting, and professional learning and development will ensure both entities are well-informed and aligned to maintain financial stability and transparency.

Section 3.2j: If applicable, describe the plan to outsource any financial management areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, fundraising, accounting, etc. Detail how the financial leadership will select and oversee the contractors.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to maintaining sound financial management by outsourcing key areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, and fundraising to trusted professionals and providers. This approach ensures compliance, efficiency, and sustainability while leveraging external expertise. With guidance from EdTec, a social enterprise specializing in charter school operations, the school will establish processes for contractor selection, oversight, and collaboration. The combination of Board expertise, contractor support, and ongoing professional development creates a robust foundation for effective financial governance.

Accounting Firm and Back-Office Provider. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) plans to contract with EdTec, a highly reputable organization, as the back-office provider (see **Attachment D** for letter of support). EdTec will provide comprehensive financial management services to include payroll processing and benefits administration, preparation of financial reports, including monthly financials and compliance documents, and support for state and federal reporting requirements.

Independent Auditor. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contract an independent auditor to conduct annual audits and ensure compliance with Tennessee Department of Education and federal requirements. The auditor will work closely with the Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to address findings and recommendations.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Oversight and Governance. The Board of Directors, led by the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, will oversee all financial contracts and service providers. The contracted auditor will report directly to the Board to ensure accountability and transparency. The Finance Committee will collaborate with the Proposed Executive Director to create and present the annual budget, monitor the approved budget and recommend revisions as needed, and develop and recommend fiscal policies to safeguard the school's assets and maintain compliance with legal requirements. EdTec will provide professional development for the Finance Committee and Board of Directors, equipping them with the skills to govern fiscal affairs effectively. EdTec will also assist in setting up financial systems and processes aligned with charter school best practices.

Addressing Skill Gaps and Building Capacity. To ensure the Finance Committee's long-term sustainability and capacity to govern the school's fiscal affairs, the Founding Board Treasurer brings extensive financial experience and will lead the Finance Committee during the startup phase. The Governance Committee will also leverage BES Follow-on Support and lead the Board's annual self-assessment using the BoardOnTrack evidence-based evaluation tools, involving formal surveys and feedback to identify areas of strength and improvement; especially financial oversight. The Governance Committee will facilitate the processes to create and track goals by committee and/or task force. This will help the Governance Committee to create tasks, assign owners and deadlines, and monitor progress over time. Through this evaluation, the Board remains adaptive and accountable, consistently striving to enhance its contribution to the school's mission. EdTec will also support ongoing training in fiscal governance, policies, and procedures, ensuring the committee remains effective as the school grows.

Financial Reporting and Audit Process. *EdTec will prepare detailed financial reports monthly and present them to the Board for review and will be shared with the authorizer and state as required. The independent auditor will also conduct an annual financial audit and provide a report to the Board. The Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will address any audit findings and implement recommendations to ensure compliance.*

Fundraising and Resource Management. *EdTec will also assist the school in managing and tracking fundraising efforts, ensuring proper allocation and reporting of funds raised. All donations and grants will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Directors to ensure alignment with the school's mission and financial goals.*

Section 3.2k: Describe the level of financial expertise of the proposed school's internal and external team members.

Board Treasurer. Daniel Kadeba, our Proposed Board Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, holds a Master of Business Administration and is a Certified Public Accountant. As the Board Treasurer, Daniel will provide direction for the financial management of the school and facilitate the board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. Daniel will also report to the Board Chair and Board of Directors alongside the Finance Committee, and will receive support from the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, EdTec, and Auditors.

As the husband of a dedicated 17-year K-12 licensed educator, Daniel deeply understands the value of education. With two children in the Rutherford County Schools system, he is committed to supporting and enhancing educational opportunities for students. Daniel brings a unique perspective as the treasurer of 501C Education Foundation, which recognizes the significance of education, especially for underserved communities.

Daniel's experience spans various roles, including Managing Consultant at Cross Country Consulting and Financial Analysis Manager at Cigna-Health Spring. His expertise in finance transformation, change management, and strategic initiatives has been evident in his contributions to global insurance clients and shared service departments. Daniel's commitment to community leadership is demonstrated through his involvement in Employee Resource Groups, mentorship, and contributions to organizations like the March of Dimes and Big Brother Big Sister of Middle Tennessee.

With a Master of Business Administration from Tennessee State University and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and Computer Sciences from Austin Peay State University, Daniel is a Certified Public Accountant and a Certified ScrumMaster. His diverse skill set, leadership experience, and dedication to education make him an asset to any endeavor focused on fostering positive change and supporting the growth of future leaders.

The specific responsibilities of the Board Treasurer are as follows:

1. Chair of the Finance Committee.
2. Provides direction for the oversight of the school's record keeping and accounting policies.
3. Ensures the presentation of timely and meaningful financial reports to the board to ensure that the full board completely understands the financial picture.
4. Ensures the development of the annual budget and its submission to the Board for its approval. Leads the monitoring of budget implementation.

5. Oversees the development and board review of financial policies and procedures. With the Finance Committee, monitors the adherence to financial policies and procedures adopted by the Board.
6. Develops and monitors any investment policies adopted by the Board.
7. Ensures that assets are protected and invested according to board policy.
8. Leads the board in assuring compliance with federal, state and other financial reporting requirements.
9. Presents the recommendation of the auditor to the Board for their approval. Reviews the results of the audit with the Finance Committee, including the management letter, develops a plan for remediation, if necessary, and presents the results to the Board.
10. Takes responsibility for the design of an annual board education program so that all board members can effectively conduct oversight of the financial health of the organization.

The qualifications of the Board Treasurer are as follows:

1. Commitment to and energy to support the charter school's mission, goals, and core values.
2. An understanding of the distinctions between governance and management.
3. A strong understanding of the record keeping accounting systems, financial reports and financial policies and procedures of the organization.
4. Ability to focus on both the short-term and long-term financial health of the organization.

Indicators of effectiveness are as follows:

1. Meets annual goals as identified and adopted by the board at the beginning of the leadership term.
2. Is perceived by other board members as being transparent and efficient in delivering financial reports and as being aggressively protective of the integrity of the organization's fiscal management.
3. Is perceived by staff as supporting and adding value to their work.
4. Is perceived by most parents and other community members as being accessible, fair, constructive, and representative of the interests of the broader school community.

Finance Committee. The Finance Committee has responsibility for working with the Proposed Executive Director to create the upcoming fiscal year budget; present budget recommendations to the Board; monitor implementation of the approved budget on a regular basis and recommend proposed budget revisions; and recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the organization's assets. The Finance Committee is assisted by the Proposed Executive Director. The members of the Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer of the Board who shall serve as Chair, the Board Chair who shall serve as an ex-officio member, together with other Board members appointed by the Chair with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the Bylaws.

The specific responsibilities of the Finance Committee are as follows:

1. Review, and recommend to the Board for approval, an annual budget for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director.
2. Also in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director, review and recommend to the Board for approval and annually revise a three-year financial forecast and long range financial plans based on the forecast.
3. Review grant proposals when required by funders, and when necessary, recommend action by the Board.
4. Review all non-budgeted expenditures over a set dollar amount to be determined by the Board and recommend action to the Board.
5. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
6. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on the same to the Board of Directors.
7. Arrange for an annual audit with submission of the same to the Board.
8. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Section 3.2l: Describe the proposed school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected.

Contingency Planning for Financial Stability. Novus SMART Academy (K–8) has developed a comprehensive contingency plan to ensure financial stability in the event that anticipated revenues are delayed or fall short. As a tuition-free public charter school, the majority of our funding is tied directly to student enrollment. A shortfall in enrollment would significantly reduce per-pupil funding, potentially leading to budget deficits and threatening essential fixed costs such as staff salaries, facilities, and operational expenses. To proactively address this risk, we have established a strategic framework designed to preserve our mission and ensure uninterrupted educational services.

Proactive Enrollment Strategy. Understanding the critical role of enrollment in our financial health, Novus SMART Academy is implementing an aggressive student recruitment and community outreach strategy well ahead of the school's opening. To date, we have partnered with Meredith McGann, Director of Policy & Outreach at Tennesseans for Student Success, and GrowthFuel Marketing to strengthen our community engagement. Together, we have launched targeted marketing campaigns, including outreach to 599 families with children aged 4 to 7 in the 37167 and 37086 zip codes. These

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

families were selected based on high likelihood scores (80–100) for both School Switch and School Choice, increasing the probability of converting interest into enrollment. These efforts are designed to build a strong applicant pipeline and enhance the likelihood of meeting or exceeding enrollment targets.

Scenario Modeling and Financial Flexibility. Novus SMART Academy has developed multiple enrollment models, including a conservative scenario based on achieving 75% of the target enrollment. Each model incorporates intentional cost-reduction strategies that allow us to maintain essential academic operations and remain financially solvent under varying conditions.

Scalable Staffing and Cost Management. Hiring at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be phased and aligned with actual enrollment rather than projections. This approach ensures personnel costs remain sustainable and responsive to confirmed revenue. In the event of under-enrollment, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with EdTec, the Board Treasurer, and the Finance Committee to prioritize expenditures. Core expenses, such as instructional materials and staff compensation, will be safeguarded, while non-essential items, such as certain furniture purchases, advanced technology not critical to operations, and specialty equipment, may be deferred or eliminated.

Long-Term Financial Resilience. In addition to immediate mitigation strategies, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has also implemented long-term financial planning to address broader risks. This includes conducting detailed cost analyses of pre-opening expenses, actively seeking startup grants and philanthropic support, and delaying non-critical purchases until enrollment numbers are confirmed. Our staff retention strategy, which features competitive compensation, robust onboarding, and meaningful professional development, also serves to minimize costly turnover.

Diversification of Revenue. To reduce over-reliance on public funding, we are actively diversifying our revenue sources. This includes pursuing private donations, community sponsorships, and in-kind contributions, while applying for grants to support key academic initiatives and professional development programs.

Facilities and Operational Preparedness. To prepare for potential delays or cost overruns related to facility readiness, we have enlisted experienced real estate professionals and built in ample time for contingency planning. Alternative facility options have also been identified to ensure we can remain on schedule.

Through deliberate planning, strong oversight, and a mission-driven approach, Novus SMART Academy (K–8) is well-positioned to navigate financial uncertainties. Our comprehensive contingency planning ensures that we can continue delivering an extraordinary, high-quality educational experience to every scholar, regardless of financial fluctuations.

Section 3.2m: Detail the cash flow contingency plan if revenue projections are not met or expenditures exceed anticipated amounts. The plan should include an explanation of sources, including financing terms, if the contingency plan includes loans, commitments, funds from an outside donor, or an alternative funding source.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed a robust contingency plan to address potential financial challenges, ensuring operational stability and continuity even in the face of revenue shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. This plan reflects a commitment to financial prudence, flexibility, and sustainability.

Revenue Shortfall Contingency Plan. Revenue has been conservatively estimated based on the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) funding model, ensuring that any overperformance in enrollment or funding will bolster the school's financial position.

Secured Grants & Commitments. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) secured $1.53M in grants and a $250k commitment from Building Hope to support facilities costs post-authorization (see **Attachment D)**. Overall, this funding will cover startup and operational costs during our critical early years (Years 0-2).

Capital Campaigns and Fundraising. Post-authorization, the Development Committee will launch capital campaigns to secure additional funding from philanthropic donors and local supporters. Relationships with local funders in Metro Nashville and Rutherford County will enhance our financial stability.

Alternative Financing Sources. As a last resort, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will apply for an interest-free line of credit through The New Neighbor Group, LLC, with up to $1M available to address cash flow gaps. The Proposed Executive Director is actively engaged in discussions with The New Neighbor Group, ensuring this option remains viable if needed.

Cash Flow Management. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use secured grants and funding as the primary source of cash flow support during Years 0-2. If delays in state or federal revenue disbursements occur when we open in Year 1, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will apply for the interest-free line of credit through The New Neighbor Group, LLC, with up to $1M available as a backup option.

Section 3.2 – Operating Budget Narrative
(Required for All Sponsors)

Short-Term Financing: To address potential cash flow challenges during the startup years, the academy will consider securing a short-term loan or line of credit. Borrowing will be limited to essential operational needs, with loan amounts based on projected gaps between revenues and critical expenditures. Repayment plans will align with anticipated revenue growth in Years 3-5, ensuring financial sustainability over time.

Vendor Payment Terms. The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, alongside the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will negotiate extended or deferred payment terms with vendors, particularly for lease agreements and contracted services, to alleviate cash flow pressures. Expenditure adjustments may include delaying equipment purchases, renegotiating service contracts, or postponing staffing hires that do not compromise the instructional model and programming.

Expense Management and Mitigation Strategies. If a material revenue or expense variance exceeds 20%, the Board of Directors will call for a budget reevaluation by the Finance Committee and implement necessary adjustments. Staffing plans will be reviewed with all hires, delayed start dates, and/or reductions in positions considered to align with revised budgetary constraints that do not compromise the instructional model and programming.

Facilities Flexibility. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) plans to secure a facility lease that operates on an "as utilized" basis. If this arrangement cannot be secured, the budget includes provisions to lease a facility appropriate for the school's needs in Years 1-5, with an option to relocate as the school grows.

Oversight and Monitoring. The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee will regularly monitor financial performance, reviewing monthly financial reports to identify and address potential shortfalls early with our proposed back office services provider, Edtec. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will collaborate with EdTec to implement robust financial controls, cash flow monitoring, and compliance measures, ensuring financial stability and adherence to state and federal requirements.

Long-Term Sustainability. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to maintaining a positive fund balance across all five years of operation. Contingency plans will focus on achieving long-term financial sustainability, ensuring that short-term challenges do not compromise the school's mission. By preparing for potential revenue shortfalls and cash flow challenges through diversified financing sources, expenditure flexibility, and strong oversight, the school is well-positioned to navigate financial uncertainties while remaining focused on delivering a high-quality educational experience for scholars and families.

Section 3.3 – Network Financial Plan
(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 3)

Section 4 – Portfolio Review & Performance Record

Section 4.1 – School Portfolio Summary *(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 1)*

Section 4.2 – Academic Performance Record *(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 1)*

Section 4.3 – Fiscal and Operational Performance Record *(Required if Answered "Yes" to Sponsor History and Intent Question 1)*

Attachments

Use the Attachment Coversheets provided in the following section to clearly indicate the beginning of each attachment. All attachments must be included following the narrative section of the application. This approach preserves the narrative's clarity and allows reviewers to reference supporting documents easily.

Attachment	Section	Description	Requirement Notes
A	1.4	Annual Academic Calendar	*Required for all sponsors*
B	1.4	Daily Schedule	
C	1.5	Enrollment Policy	
D	1.6	Letters of Support	
E	1.7	Student Handbook and Required Forms	
F	1.7	Student Discipline Policy	
G	2.1	Articles of Incorporation	
H	2.1	Proof of Non-Profit and Tax-Exempt Status	
I	2.1	By-laws	
J	2.1	Board Member Code of Conduct	
K	2.1	Conflict of Interest Policy	
L	2.1	Board Member Resumes or Biographies	
M	2.1	Board Policies	
N	2.4	Organizational Chart: Year 1	
O	2.4	Organizational Chart: Full Capacity	
P	2.4	School Leader Resume *(if hired)*	
Q	2.7	Insurance Coverage	
R	2.8	CMO Agreement	*Required if "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 6.*
S	2.9	Network Annual Progress Report	*Required if "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 3.*
T	2.11	Organizational Chart: Year 1	
U	2.11	Organizational Chart: Year 5	
V	2.12	Previously Approved and Authorized Application for School Being Replicated	*Required if "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 4.*
W	3.1	Operating Budget Template	*Required for all sponsors.*
X	3.2	Operating Budget Narrative	
Y	3.3	Network Financial Plan	*Required if "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 3.*
Z	4.1	Portfolio and Performance Template	*Required if "yes" on Sponsor History and Intent Question 1.*
	4.2		
	4.2		
AA	4.3	Performance and Evaluation Reports	
BB	4.3	Renewal and Interim Reports	
CC	4.3	Annual Reports	
DD	4.3	Litigation Documents	
EE	4.3	Audited Financial Statements	

Attachment A Cover Page

Annual Academic Calendar

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Attachment A: Annual Academic Calendar

Calendar Legend

Summer PLD (17 days), Stockpiled PLD and/or Conferences (6 days; no scholars)	Scholars in School for Full Day
Vacation, No School, School Closed	Scholars' Early Dismissal (70%) & Teacher PLD (30%)
School Leaders in Office	Early Dismissal Day for All
Required Scholar Orientation	Testing Windows

Quarter 1	August 3 - October 2	Quarter 2	Octboer 12 - December 18
Quarter 3	January 4 - March 5	Quarter 4	March 15 - May 28
Summer School	June 1 - June 30	Potential Snow Make-up Days (6)	Feb. 15, March 15, May 27-18, June 1-2

June 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2026 (21 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026 (20 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026 (16 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026 (17 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026 (14 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027 (17 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027 (19 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027 (16 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027 (22 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027 (20 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027 (20 days of summer school)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2027 (22 days of instruction)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	12	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Important Dates & Events	
July 6-10	Summer Learning & Professional Development (Teachers & Staff)
July 13-17	Summer Learning & Professional Development (Teachers & Staff)
July 20-24	Summer Learning & Professional Development (Teachers & Staff)
July 27 & 31	Summer Learning & Professional Development (Teachers & Staff)
July 28-30	Founding Scholars Orientation (8-12); Teachers & Staff PLD (1-3)
August 3	First Day of School: SY 26-27 Q1 Begins
August 5	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
August 12	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
August 17-21	NWEA MAP Testing (Fall Baseline)
August 19	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
August 26	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
September 2	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
September 7	Labor Day Observance (school closed)
September 9	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
September 9	Q1 Progress Reports Issued (Parent Communication by Friday for Ds, Fs, and/or Behavior)
September 14-18	College & Career Exploration Field Experiences
September 16	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
September 23	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
September 30	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
September 28-October 2	Q1 Interim Assessments
October 5-9	Fall Break (school closed)
October 12	Professional Learning & Development (no scholars)
October 14	Q1 Report Card Pick Up (Scholars w/ Ds or Fs only)
October 21	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
October 28	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
November 4	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
November 11	Veterans Day Observance (school closed)
November 16-20	Habits for Humanity Community Service Project
November 18	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
November 18	Q2 Progress Reports Issued (Parent Communication by Friday for Ds, Fs, and/or Behavior)
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Holiday (school closed)
December 2	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
December 9	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
December 14-18	Q2 Interim Assessments
December 16	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
December 21-January 1	Winter Break (school closed)
January 4-5	Professional Learning & Development (no scholars)
January 6	Q2 Report Card Issued or Pick Up (Scholars w/ Ds or Fs only; PM only)
Janaury 6-8	Scholar-led Conferences
Janaury 11-15	Winter MAP Testing
January 13	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
January 18	MLK Day Observance (No School)
January 20	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
January 27	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
February 3	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
February 10	C3 Progress Reports Issued (Parent Communication by Friday for Ds, Fs, and/or Behavior; Potential Retained Meetings)
February 15	Professional Learning & Development (no scholars)
February 16-19	College & Career Exploration Field Experiences
February 17	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
February 24	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
March 1-5	Q3 Interim Assessments
March 3	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
March 8-12	Spring Break (Vacation, No School)
3/16-20	Staff PD/Deep Data Dives & Reflections in Academics, Culture & Operations (No Scholars)
March 15	Professional Learning & Development (no scholars)
March 15	C3 Report Card Pick Up (Scholars w/ Ds or Fs only)
March 17	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
March 24	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
March 26	Good Friday Observance (No School)
March 31	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
April 7	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
April 12-23	TNReady State Testing (blackout dates)
April 14	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
April 21	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
April 21	C4 Progress Reports Issued (Parent Communication by Friday for Ds, Fs, and/or Behavior)
April 28	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
May 5	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
May 12	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
May 17-21	Spring MAP Testing
May 19	Scholar & Staff Early Release Day
May 25	End-of-Testing (EOT) Celebration Field Trip (schoolwide)
May 26	Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff PLD (30%)
May 26	Last Day of School: Q4 Ends (Scholar Early Release (70%) + Staff EOY Closeout (30%)) + Report Card Pick Up (Scholars w/ Ds or Fs only; Retained Meetings)
May 27-June 2	Potential Snow Make-up Days
May 31	Memorial Day Observance (No School)
June 3-30	Summer School

Attachment B Cover Page

Daily Schedule
REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Daily Schedule for Grades K-2 (M, T, Th)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-8:00 30 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
8:00-9:00 60 min	RTI2-Academics (240 minutes per week)	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.

9:00-11:30 150 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts (750 minutes per week)	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*
		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*

11:30-12:00 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
12:00-12:20 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
12:20-1:40 80 min	SMART Block: Math Focus (400 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.

1:40-2:10 30 min	SMART Block: Science Focus (120 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
2:10-2:40 30 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies (120 minutes per week)	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
2:40-3:00 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
3:00-3:30 30 min	SMART Block: Arts/Electives Rotation Schedule (120 minutes per week) Arts/Electives Technology	 Physical Education, Music, and Art connect to classroom themes that support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.
3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades K-2 (W)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-7:45 15 min	Arrival & Abbreviated Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
7:45-8:45 60 min	RTI2-Academics	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.

8:45-11:15 150 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*

		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*
11:15-11:45 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
11:45-12:05 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
12:05-1:25 80 min	SMART Block: Math Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
1:25-1:45 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
1:45-2:00 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades K-2 (F)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-8:00 30 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).

8:00-10:30 150 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts (750 minutes per week)	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*
		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*

10:30-11:00 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
11:00-11:20 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
11:20-12:40 80 min	SMART Block: Math Focus (400 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.

12:40-1:10 30 min	SMART Block: Science Focus (120 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
1:10-1:40 30 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies (120 minutes per week)	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
1:40-2:00 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
2:00-2:30 30 min	SMART Block: Arts/Electives Rotation Schedule (120 minutes per week) Arts/Electives Technology	 Physical Education, Music, and Art connect to classroom themes that support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.
2:30-3:00 30 min	College & Career Exploration on 1st, 3rd, and 5th Fridays. SEL & Character Education on 2nd and 4th Fridays in addition to daily Morning Meetings.	Guided activities, guest speakers, and/or virtual tours to introduce students to college and career concepts. Lessons on empathy, resilience, and our Novus Core Values delivered through interactive activities.
3:00-3:30 30 min	Noble Fest Celebration	Celebrate successes for the week with Noble Core Values awards, project presentations, SEL reflections, and/or community-building activities.
3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 3-5 (M, T, Th)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-8:00 30 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
8:00-9:00 60 min	RTI2-Academics (240 minutes per week)	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.
9:00-11:00 120 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts (600 minutes per week)	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.

		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*
		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*

11:00-11:30 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
11:30-11:50 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
11:50-1:20 90 min	SMART Block: Math Focus (450 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
1:20-2:00 40 min	SMART Block: Science Focus (180 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
2:00-2:40 40 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies (160 minutes per week)	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
2:40-3:00 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
3:00-3:30 30 min	SMART Block: Arts/Electives Rotation Schedule (120 minutes per week) Arts/Electives Technology	 Physical Education, Music, and Art connect to classroom themes that support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.
3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 3-5 (W)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-7:45 15 min	Arrival & Abbreviated Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).

7:45-8:45 60 min	RTI2-Academics	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.

8:45-10:45 120 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*
		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*

10:45-11:15 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
11:15-11:35 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
11:35-1:05 90 min	SMART Block: Math Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
1:05-1:25 20 min	SMART Block: Science Focus (180 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
1:25-1:45 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
1:45-2:00 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 3-5 (F)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-8:00 30 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).

8:00-10:00 120 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts (600 minutes per week)	Literacy development through Foundational Skills, Language, Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Core Connections (lesson 1 only), Introducing the Read-Aloud, Presenting the Read-Aloud, Application, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Oral Language Development*
		  ○ *Standard 1: Support meaning through interaction using visuals, realia, and peer discussions.*
		  ○ *Standard 2: Develop language to identify, understand, and explain concepts using sentence frames and visual prompts.*
		• *Foundational Literacy Skills*
		  ○ *Standard 3: Build skills to decode and comprehend grade-appropriate texts.*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on phonemic awareness and fluency to build accuracy and meaning-making in text.*
		• *Comprehension and Fluency: Standard 5: Engage with narratives and informational texts to make meaning, infer, and analyze content.*

10:00-10:30 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
10:30-10:50 20 min	Recess I & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
10:50-12:20 90 min	SMART Block: Math Focus (450 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
12:20-1:00 40 min	SMART Block: Science Focus (180 minutes per week)	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
1:00-1:40 40 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies (160 minutes per week)	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
1:40-2:00 20 min	Recess II & Social Interactions	Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.
2:00-2:30 30 min	SMART Block: Arts/Electives Rotation Schedule (120 minutes per week) Arts/Electives Technology	 Physical Education, Music, and Art connect to classroom themes that support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.
2:30-3:00 30 min	College & Career Exploration on 1st, 3rd, and 5th Fridays. SEL & Character Education on 2nd and 4th Fridays in addition to daily Morning Meetings.	Guided activities, guest speakers, and/or virtual tours to introduce students to college and career concepts. Lessons on empathy, resilience, and our Novus Core Values delivered through interactive activities.
3:00-3:30 30 min	Noble Fest Celebration	Celebrate successes for the week with Noble Core Values awards, project presentations, SEL reflections, and/or community-building activities.

3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal (75 minutes per week)	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 6-8 (M, T, Th)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-7:45 15 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
7:45-8:15 30 min	College & Career Exploration on Mondays and Thursdays. SEL & Character Education on Tuesdays and Fridays.	Guided activities, guest speakers, and/or virtual tours to introduce students to college and career concepts. Lessons on empathy, resilience, and our Novus Core Values delivered through interactive activities.
8:15-9:15 60 min	RTI2-Academics	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.
9:15-10:10 55 min	SMART Block: Science Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
10:10-11:05 55 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
11:05-12:35 90 min	SMART Block: Math Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
12:35-1:05 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
1:05-2:00 55 min	SMART Block: Related Arts and Technology	Activities such as physical education, music, and art connect to classroom themes support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.

2:00-3:30 90 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts	Literacy development through Whole Class Learning, Small Group Learning, Independent Learning, Writing Workshops, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Morphology Study*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on morphology and syntax to support understanding of content-specific texts.*
		• *Comprehension and Analysis*
		  ○ *Standard 5: Analyze grade-level texts, focusing on main ideas and evidence-based interpretations.*
		• *Grammar and Syntax Practice*
		  ○ *Standard 9: Apply advanced grammar structures to improve academic language production.*

3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 6-8 (W)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-7:45 15 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
7:45-8:45 60 min	RTI2-Academics • Progress Monitoring • IXL Blended Learning Intervention	Small group intervention that uses data to identify students' needs and match them with instructional strategies; helps educators meet students at their instructional level to reach their potential (State requirement). **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 150 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:5 in Grades K-5 and 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier II. **Satisfies the minimum requirement of at least 200 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:3 in Grades K-5 and 225 minutes per week with a ratio of 1:6 in Grades 6-8 for Tier III.
8:45-9:45 60 min	SMART Block: Math Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
9:45-10:45 60 min	SMART Block: Science Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
10:45-11:45 60 min	Lunch (30 min) Recess & Social Interactions (30 min)	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers. Outdoor play and social activities support physical health and peer relationships.

11:45-12:45 60 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts	Literacy development through Whole Class Learning, Small Group Learning, Independent Learning, Writing Workshops, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Morphology Study*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on morphology and syntax to support understanding of content-specific texts.*
		• *Comprehension and Analysis*
		  ○ *Standard 5: Analyze grade-level texts, focusing on main ideas and evidence-based interpretations.*
		• *Grammar and Syntax Practice*
		  ○ *Standard 9: Apply advanced grammar structures to improve academic language production.*

12:45-1:45 60 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
1:45-2:00 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Daily Schedule for Grades 6-8 (F)		
Time	**Activity**	**Description**
7:30-7:45 15 min	Arrival & Breakfast Morning Meeting	Students begin the day with SEL-focused activities (i.e., greetings, mindfulness, and goal-setting).
7:45-8:15 30 min	College & Career Exploration on Mondays and Thursdays. SEL & Character Education on Tuesdays and Fridays.	Guided activities, guest speakers, and/or virtual tours to introduce students to college and career concepts. Lessons on empathy, resilience, and our Novus Core Values delivered through interactive activities.
8:15-9:10 55 min	SMART Block: Science Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, and inquiry-based learning in Science.
9:10-10:05 55 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in Social Studies	Students explore history, geography, and civic engagement with activities connecting past and present in Social Studies.
10:05-11:35 90 min	SMART Block: Math Focus	Students engage in hands-on experiments, real-world problem-solving, project-based learning, and personalized learning on iReady for Math.
11:35-12:05 30 min	Lunch	Students eat lunch and engage in informal conversations with peers.
12:05-1:00 55 min	SMART Block: Related Arts and Technology	Activities such as physical education, music, and art connect to classroom themes support physical health and promote creativity. Students use digital tools to conduct research or work on tech-based projects in Technology.

1:00-2:30 90 min	SMART Block: Research Focus in English/Language Arts	Literacy development through Whole Class Learning, Small Group Learning, Independent Learning, Writing Workshops, and Personalized Learning on iReady for Reading.
		
		ELL Structured English Immersion ELPA21 Alignment
		• *Vocabulary and Morphology Study*
		  ○ *Standard 4: Focus on morphology and syntax to support understanding of content-specific texts.*
		• *Comprehension and Analysis*
		  ○ *Standard 5: Analyze grade-level texts, focusing on main ideas and evidence-based interpretations.*
		• *Grammar and Syntax Practice*
		  ○ *Standard 9: Apply advanced grammar structures to improve academic language production.*

2:30-3:30 60 min	Noble Fest Celebration	Celebrate successes for the week with Noble Core Values awards, project presentations, SEL reflections, and/or community-building activities.
3:30-3:45 15 min	Reflection and Dismissal	Students reflect on their learning and celebrate the day's achievements.

Attachment C Cover Page

Enrollment Policy

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Tentative dates for the application period and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including an explanation of how the school intends to receive and process application forms and run a lottery, if necessary (considering the authorizer's open enrollment and lottery schedule).

Recruitment of Scholars and Families. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will lead recruitment efforts in partnership with the Academics Committee, which will have an essential role in our recruitment efforts. During planning in Year 0, they will function as the Community Engagement Task Force. We will collaborate with community organizations, such as the Smyrna Boys and Girls Club, who will partner with us to build other partnerships and to enhance our community engagement efforts. Our goal is to achieve at least 150% applications for our Founding Scholars and Families in grades K-1 (288 applications). This involves filling 100% of available seats (192), creating a waitlist with at least 50% (at least 96) of the total enrollment goal. Using PowerSchools' Unified Operations Enrollment system will streamline our application, lottery, and enrollment processes. This system will also ensure our lottery is run fairly and securely with built-in workflows, secure user permissions, and detailed audit logs. The lottery will be held on February 20, 2026, with all planned seats filled by that date. Efforts will be made to identify partner organizations that can contribute to enhancing our scholars' educational experiences that may include mentoring organizations, before and after school programs, and field experience opportunities. The table below provides details regarding the start-up plan to recruit scholars and families.

Community Engagement				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Finalize community engagement plan.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Design engagement tracking spreadsheet.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Draft and finalize community survey.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Design tent, retractable banner, and tablecloth.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Draft and finalize school flyer.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	Complete
Plan and implement parent engagement meetings and events.	Executive Director	Executive Director	8/29/2025	In Progress
Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Families				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Create outline of Student and Family handbook.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	3/13/2026	Complete
First draft of Student and Family handbook created.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	3/31/2026	Complete
Finalize Student and Family Handbook	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	In Progress
Create Student and Family Welcome Letter	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	Not Started

Create uniform ordering letter and directions.	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	Executive Director	4/17/2026	Not Started
Create Technology Agreement	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Create Technology Expectations & Fees	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Draft and Operationalize Scholar Orientation and Parent Orientations	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	5/29/2026	In Progress
Determine family communication system.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Draft transportation letter.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create list of items to include in first days of school communication (academic calendar, uniform, arrival/dismissal systems, student handbook, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Coordinate sending of academic school year calendar to families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create "Meet Your Teacher" Powerpoint	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	AP of School Culture & Community Engagement	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create specific communication for Health Form/Immunization Requirements	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create master communication containing first day of school documents (academic calendar, tech expectations, etc.).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create master communication plan for first day of school documents (with reminders).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Create family communication plan for first days of school (include academic calendar, arrival/dismissal plans, family handbook).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	5/29/2026	Not Started
Send family communication regarding first days of school (include academic calendar, arrival/dismissal plans and Student & Family Handbook).	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/1/2026	Not Started
Send reminder family communication regarding first days of school.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	7/31/2026	Not Started
Enrollment				
Task	**Owner**	**Approver**	**Due Date**	**Status**
Draft and share monthly newsletters.	Executive Director	Executive Director	Ongoing	In Progress
Finalize lottery protocol.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started

Develop enrollment process.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started
Secure lottery certification entity.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	In Progress
Practice lottery protocol.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	Ongoing	Not Started
Highlight lottery date on website and social media.	AP of Operations & Finance	Executive Director	1/1/2026	Not Started
Determine audit structure for IEP students.	AP of Scholar Access w/ Office Manager Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Determine process to check for IEPs if not indicated.	AP of Scholar Access w/ Office Manager Collaboration	Executive Director	4/30/2026	Not Started
Determine cadence of waitlist pulls, offer deadlines, and Welcome Events.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/30/2026	Not Started
Determine procedure if students miss registration deadline.	AP of Operations & Finance w/ Executive Director Collaboration	Executive Director	1/16/2026	Not Started
Set date and plan "Welcome to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)" New Family Orientation	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Create Family Resource Hub on website.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
Open first round of scholar applications.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
First round of scholar applications end.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/30/2026	Not Started
Notify families of acceptance, if applicable, no Lottery is required.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Notify families that a Lottery will occur, if applicable.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/6/2026	Not Started
Conduct admissions lottery and establish waitlist.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/31/2026	Not Started
Acceptance or Waitlist Notifications sent to families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/31/2026	Not Started
Continue Recruitment/Outreach Campaign as needed.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Receive Acceptance Letters from Families	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Begin monthly warm outreach to prospective families.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	1/1/2026	Not Started
Conduct waitlist pulls.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Student enrollment and onboarding.	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	3/9/2026	Not Started
Begin requesting student records; send district w/d info for scholars.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	4/6/2026	Not Started
Begin distributing, collecting, reviewing and filing Home Language Survey.	Office Manager w/ AP of Scholar Access Collaboration	AP of Operations & Finance	4/6/2026	Not Started

Create files for student records.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Have all missing paperwork filled out (releases, medical, transportation, FRPL, etc.).	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	7/31/2026	Not Started
Distribute uniform tops at Mandatory Parent/Guardian Orientations on July 28-30, 2026, or at the Back-to-School Block Party on August 1, 2026.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Prepare "Welcome to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)" Materials	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Mail Welcome Letter to families as scholars enroll and include upcoming events and registration requirements.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	Ongoing	Not Started
Call all families to confirm attendance at AM Scholar Orientation and PM Parent Orientations on July 28-30, 2026.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	7/17/2026	Not Started
Student Registration	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Late Student Registration	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Deliver swag to enorlled students, first round.	Office Manager	AP of Operations & Finance	8/1/2026	Not Started
Begin recruiting campaign for Fall 2027	AP of Operations & Finance	AP of Operations & Finance	10/1/2026	Not Started

Application Process. Incompliance with T.C.A§49-13-113(b)(1), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will enroll any eligible scholar who applies, in a timely manner, to our school if there are seats available based on capacity of our program, class, grade level or building. Any scholar residing in Rutherford County, Tennessee is eligible for enrollment at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). We accept applications for enrollment online, mail, or in-person for submission. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s staff will gather basic information from application forms and transfer them into a secure application database, such as a scholar information system, so that we may communicate with scholars and families about their application status. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain original applications until the following year's lottery process in the event scholars are later admitted. The application window will open annually on January 1st, and the application deadline will be February 1st at 11:59 pm.

Lottery. In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(B), if applications received for enrollment by the end of our application period whose qualifications meet the preferences stated above exceed our planned capacity, we will conduct a lottery that will be facilitated using PowerSchools' Unified Operations Enrollment system. The lottery will occur within fifteen (15) days of the close of application period, on/before February 20th, during which names will be randomly selected for each available seat. Within ten (10) days, notifications will be sent to scholars and families about the lottery via email and through the United States postal services. Scholars and families do not have to attend the lottery to be offered a seat at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). All scholars and families will be notified after the close of the lottery.

Nondiscriminatory admission policies, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-107.

Nondiscriminatory Policy. In accordance with T.C.A § 49-13-107(b)(9) and our mission to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) does not discriminate for enrollment into our school based on race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, English proficiency, or need for special education services or disability of any kind.

Any proposed articulation agreements, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-113.

Admissions Preferences. In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(A), if applications exceed the planned capacity of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the following preferences shall apply:

- Scholars attending public schools within the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, if those scholars would otherwise be included in the area in which our school will focus;
- Scholars residing within the LEA service area in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, but who are not enrolled in public schools, if those scholars would otherwise be included in the area in which our school will focus; and

- Scholars residing outside the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located and whose needs would be included in the area in which our will focus.

In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(c), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) also reserves the right to reserve up to ten percent (10%) or twenty-five seats, whichever is less, for preference of enrollment of scholars of teachers, sponsors, or members of governing body of the charter school if it is based on family choice and the family submits a timely application. In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(d), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will give preference to scholars enrolled in the previous year, and preference to siblings of a scholar who is already enrolled in the school.

Enrollment Process. Once admitted to Novus SMART Academy (K-8), all scholars and families must complete and submit an enrollment packet that includes the following: Home Language Survey; enrollment forms; Immunization Records; transportation needs and preferences; and medical history documents. Registration requirements are inclusive of two (2) proof of residence, and the TN Health Certificate must be completed by the families' medical providers for all scholars in kindergarten, grade 7, and any new scholar to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Physicals are also required for all new scholars to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Kindergarten Eligibility: According to state law, scholars must be five (5) years old on/before August 15th to enroll in kindergarten.

Residence is defined as the place where important family activity takes place during the significant part of each day; a place where the family eats, sleeps, works, relaxes and plays. It must be a place, in short, which can be called "home." One cannot establish a residence merely by purchasing/leasing a house or an apartment or even by furnishing such a house or apartment so that it is suitable for the owner's use. No single factor is determinative; residency will be established by the totality of the circumstances.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) administration shall regularly review the residency records of scholars enrolled in the school. Upon the enrollment of each scholar and on an annual basis, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will verify to the Tennessee Department of Education each scholar's home school district, where they are entitled to attend school. Parents, guardians, or independent scholars aged 18 and over must promptly notify the school using the documentation listed below when a change in the location of the parent's or scholar's primary residence occurs.

Upon enrollment and on an annual basis the following documents can be used to establish proof of residency for verification of a scholar's ability to enroll in the school and determination of the school district the scholar is entitled to attend. These items must be current, be in the parent's/guardian's name, and include a street address. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall require two forms of proof of residency for enrollment as follows (a post office box address cannot be used to validate residency records):

- Deed or current real property tax bill.
- Lease Agreement
- Mortgage Statement
- Utility statement or receipt of utility installation issued within thirty (30) days of the date of enrollment.
- Most current bank statements available/issued to the parent or scholar that includes the address of the family's primary residence.
- Current homeowner or renter insurance declaration.
- Paycheck or pay stub issued to the parent or scholar within thirty (30) days of the date of enrollment that includes the address of the parent or scholar primary residence.
- Affidavit of Residency accompanied by a utility bill, lease or mortgage statement.

If a scholar loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless child or youth, as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 11434a, or if a scholar who is such a homeless child or youth changes temporary living arrangements, the district in which the scholar is entitled to attend school shall be determined in accordance with division (F) (13) of § 3313.64 of the Revised Code and the "McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act," 42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.

If a scholar's records are not received within fourteen (14) days of the date of request, or if the scholar does not present any one of the following: (1) a certification of birth; (2) a passport or attested transcript of a passport filed with a registrar of passports at a point of entry of the United States showing the date and place of birth of the child; (3) I-94 CARD, Permanent Resident Visa, or Green Card; or (4) a birth affidavit, the Proposed Executive Director or designee will notify the Rutherford County, Tennessee law enforcement agency of the possibility that the scholar may be a missing child.

No scholar, at the time of initial entry or at the beginning of each school year shall be permitted to remain in school for more than fourteen (14) days if the scholar has not met the minimum immunization requirements established by the Tennessee Department of Health or the scholar presents written evidence satisfactory and acceptable as an exception to such requirement in law.

Identification of any pre-admission activities for scholars or parents; and policies and procedures for scholar waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

Waitlist. Any scholar that does not secure a seat based on the lottery will be granted a space on the waitlist. Families will be notified via email and through the United States postal services of their scholar's waitlist status at the same time as scholars accepted into the school. Any scholar accepted from the waitlist will have one (1) week from the date of notice to accept the available seat by submitting all required enrollment paperwork to the Office Secretary. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall

comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) with respect to the publication of any list of scholars' names before, during, and after the enrollment and lottery process.

Withdrawals. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will always do what is in the best interest of our scholars and families with the intention to keep them enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8. However, if scholars and families withdraw from Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the school will request families to notify the school office, in writing, of the intended withdrawal three- to five (3-5) days prior to the withdrawal date. Families will be required to meet with the Proposed Executive Director to sign the finalized withdrawal paperwork prior to their scholar's separation from the school. This will provide enough time for teachers and office staff to close out records for the scholar. All debts must be paid, and all curriculum resources and technology must be returned prior to releasing finalized withdrawal documentation to scholars and families.

Reenrollment. Scholars and families wishing to reenroll at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) must complete the application process, enrollment process, and lottery process in the event there are no open seats available in the desired grade. Scholars and families wishing to reenroll that may have transferred "not in good standing" will be required to meet with the Proposed Executive Director before their enrollment status is active to create a plan that will support the overall success of the scholar should he/she return.

Records Request or Transfer. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will verify eligibility according to residency and will report names and addresses to Rutherford County Schools and/or Murfreesboro City Schools. Once a scholar is identified as enrolled at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) or intending to transfer from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to another school, the school will request or transfer school records via email and through the United States postal services, with documentation signed by the scholar's parent/guardian, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) or the school of last attendance. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will conduct follow-up calls to schools that have not transferred the scholar's records as requested, and Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will release records of scholars intending to transfer within five (5) business days. This will also serve as notice to the district of residence as required by law. The records request or transfer will include a request for receipt of any scholar's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Learning Plan (ILP), and/or 504 Plan.

Attachment D Cover Page

Letters of Support

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Timestamp	Email Address	Parent/Guardian First Name	Parent/Guardian Last Name	Parent/Guardian Phone Number	Best Time to Call	What city in Rutherford County do you live in or are closest to?	Child First Name	Child Last Name	Scholar Grade Level in August 2026	Are there any siblings?	How many siblings?	I support Novus SMART Academy and school choice with the intent to enroll.	If you could design the ideal school experience for your child or children, what would it look like? Please share as many specific details as possible.
2/15/2024	tfwoodson1981@gmail.com	Tamela	Sullivan	7316762505	Morning, Afternoon, Evening	La Vergne	La vergne Lake Elementary	Jackson Sullivan	6th Grade	Yes	1-2	Yes	I would like to see home economics, art classes and other language classes added
5/14/2024	erayjp@gmail.com	Iva	Pardue	6159487389	Morning, Afternoon, Evening	Smyrna	Violet	Baxter	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	Loving teaching environment
5/19/2024	gene_riley@yahoo.com	Shanice	Riley	6155791707	Morning, Afternoon	Smyrna	Josiah	Riley	1st Grade	Yes	1-2	Yes	I would love a school that works with children where they are. I understand that have to learn to be accountable but some children just need a little more help than others.
5/19/2024	acoleman5@me.com	Andrea	Coleman	9014933644	Evening	Smyrna	Xavier	Coleman	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	Exploratory learning. Rigorous curriculum. Warm and demanding teachers.
5/20/2024	jeremycheairs@gmail.com	JEREMY	CHEAIRS	6159950503	Afternoon	La Vergne	Jacobi	Cheairs	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	A school that is creative to their students. Safety and quality teachers that will go above and beyond during class
5/20/2024	hopeho0452@gmail.com	Hope	Ho	4073463042	Evening	Smyrna	Antonio	Matosevic	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	Posably being having extra curricular activities that can help him with teamwork.
8/30/2024 20:03:08	prenticesims@gmail.com	Prentice	Sims	6293358772	Evening	Murfreesboro	Jilleah	Cathey	5th Grade	No	0	Yes	An growing environment that encourages her to learn and making learning fun!
8/30/2024 21:23:13	ameda.sims@gmail.com	Ameda	Sims	6153511901	Evening	Murfreesboro	Jilleah	Cathey	5th Grade	No	0	Yes	Additional teachers
1/23/2025 15:09:10	clarson262@gmail.com	Courtney	Larson	6155740165	Morning	Smyrna	Jaeliana	Larson	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	Hands on
1/23/2025 15:38:43	srtownsend@live.com	Shona	Taylor	615-606-9217	Afternoon	Smyrna	Evelyn (k) Orleia (1)	Sons	Kindergarten	Yes	2-3	I have questions.	Structured to my child developmental growth with biblical principles
1/23/2025 15:41:36	arbogastfamily15@gmail.com	Stephanie	Arbogast	6367513768	Afternoon	Smyrna	Declan	Arbogast	Kindergarten	Yes	1-2	I have questions.	Safety, child need driven, communicative, community based, intentional
1/23/2025 15:58:28	chenjaminwei316@gmail.com	ben	Greuter	6292196357	Morning	Murfreesboro	levi	greuter	Kindergarten	No	0	I have questions.	stem
1/23/2025 16:19:49	antoniomatosevic3@gmail.com	antonio	matosevic	6157052303	Morning, Afternoon, Evening	Smyrna	antonio	matosevic	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	knowledge based and hands on
1/23/2025 16:27:48	David@classroompanda.com	david	smith	6154270536	Afternoon	Smyrna	Sabrina	Smith	Kindergarten	Yes	1-2	I have questions.	lots of hands on learning
1/23/2025 16:59:24	arnholt0160@gmail.com	Austin	Holt	931-319-3371	Evening	Smyrna	Archer	Holt	1st Grade	Yes	1-2	I have questions.	Inclusive, challenging, supportive
1/23/2025 17:03:53	johnathanbarnett317@yahoo.com	Johnathan	Barnett	6159815238	Afternoon	Smyrna	Justice	Barnett	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	Want to learn more.
1/23/2025 17:07:59	jeffiisha2011@gmail.com	Elisha	Blackman	6154973538	Afternoon, Evening	La Vergne	Jaylen	Blackman	1st Grade	Yes	1-2	I have questions.	hands on learning and small classroom structure
1/23/2025 17:13:01	klahollywood@gmail.com	LaKeisa & Tamar	Peterson	6152600682	Afternoon	La Vergne	Loren	Peterson	1st Grade	Yes	1-2	Yes	School that open and welcoming to different cultures.
1/23/2025 17:41:04	lexielong15@gmail.com	Lexie	Long	6159954537	Evening	Smyrna	A'yah	Sims	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	A school where she has the choice of diff art features
1/23/2025 17:55:28	perry.smiley@outlook.com	Perry	Smiley	6154036603	Afternoon	Smyrna	Lorietta	Smiley	1st Grade	Yes	1-2	I have questions.	A school open to different teaching techniques
1/24/2025 17:20:57	ejmajors@gmail.com	Eric	Majors, Jr.	629-201-3214	Evening	Smyrna	Nyla	Majors	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	My daughter is Nyla and she is 3 years old. By the time this Academy opens she will be able to attend this school. She is biracial and that's all I think about is how to prepare her for what she will run into when she starts school. With the vision of this school, it eases my worries a little. Knowing they are looking to support little brown children has my vote.

Timestamp	Email Address	Parent/Guardian First Name	Parent/Guardian Last Name	Parent/Guardian Phone Number	Best Time to Call	What city in Rutherford County do you live in or are closest to?	Child First Name	Child Last Name	Scholar Grade Level in August 2026	Are there any siblings?	How many siblings?	I support Novus SMART Academy and school choice with the intent to enroll.	If you could design the ideal school experience for your child or children, what would it look like? Please share as many specific details as possible.
1/24/2025 18:37:36	kodi0426@gmail.com	Tavarius	Grimes	615-829-6179	Evening	Smyrna	Tee	Grimes	Kindergarten	No	2-3	Yes	From what I have learned so far, the academy offers a cutting-edge curriculum that combines innovative teaching methods with the latest technology, preparing students for future demands. The dedicated faculty and supportive learning environment foster both academic excellence and personal growth. Whether you're looking to advance in your career or start a new educational journey, Novus SMART Academy is an outstanding choice.
1/24/2025 18:39:21	dsprentice27@gmail.com	Dez	Prentice-Grimes	646-427-2360	Evening	Smyrna	Tee	Grimes	Kindergarten	Yes	2-3	Yes	We have a freshman this year, and his mother and I recognized the need for a unique high school environment, so we enrolled him in a public charter high school. Dr. Sager consulted with us and guided us through that process. Now, with a 4-year-old, we want him to start at Novus in kindergarten and continue through high school. After speaking with Dr. Sager, we are confident that Novus SMART Academy is the right place for our son. We trust this school and Dr. Sager's leadership.
1/24/2025 18:50:45	tomlinson.renee@gmail.com	Rene	Tomlinson	615-585-6316	Evening	La Vergne	R.	Tomlinson	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	As a mother, I can't recommend Novus SMART Academy highly enough. The school's innovative curriculum blends modern teaching methods with cutting-edge technology, setting students up for future success. The warm, supportive environment fosters both academic excellence and personal growth. Having seen the positive impact on our family, I'm excited for my youngest to start his journey at Novus in kindergarten and stay through high school. The leadership of Dr. Sager and the dedicated staff give me complete confidence that this is the right place for my child.
													I support Dr. Sager because he believes that all children can learn and dream big. I want this experience for my granddaughter. Dr. Sager believes in the value of a good education for all students. Dr. Sager has high standards for all students. The health of a school stems from its leadership. Novus SMART Academy has the leadership, rigorous curriculum, community involvement, that are key factors that determine greatness.

Timestamp	Email Address	Parent/Guardian First Name	Parent/Guardian Last Name	Parent/Guardian Phone Number	Best Time to Call	What city in Rutherford County do you live in or are closest to?	Child First Name	Child Last Name	Scholar Grade Level in August 2026	Are there any siblings?	How many siblings?	I support Novus SMART Academy and school choice with the intent to enroll.	If you could design the ideal school experience for your child or children, what would it look like? Please share as many specific details as possible.
1/24/2025 19:00:50	tnmama1997@yahoo.com	Kolette	Gunter	615-479-7321	Evening	La Vergne	Josiah	Riley	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	I have personally had my children and grandchild attend RCS schools. Now that my youngest grandson is ready to start his academic journey I want him to experience Novus Academy. The personal experience and development he will have with Novus is very important for his growth. The learning styles and the involvement with the teachers and family and community will only enhance his ability to grow. The Novus Academy will help my grandson excel in his educational journey with excellence!!
1/24/2025 19:12:33	terahne9188@gmail.com	Terahne	Cheairs	901-292-4665	Evening	La Vergne	Jacobi	Cheairs	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	I see the mission statement of embracing innovation and creativity is in line with what I'm looking for in a school for my child. I'm looking for an institution that exposes him to inclusivity and different cultures that's realistic and relatable to the world and representation of black men in leadership such as yourself, that can look out for him and mentor him in the future. I want to expose my son to as many creative avenues as possible and I think Novus is a great start for that.
1/24/2025 19:20:55	dre.madden@yahoo.com	Dre	Madden	615-627-8284	Evening	Murfreesboro	DJ	Madden	1st Grade	No	0	Yes	Jeremy is one of my loyal customers at the barbershop and we have conversations every week about the accomplishments of Novus. I gave him some advice on great locations in our community because so many children need better schools in Rutherford County. I am looking forward to helping out at community events and to see families experience school in a different but better way.
2/8/2025 17:32:03	dalmoniqueb@ymail.com	Dalmonique	Burleson	6155091619	Morning, Afternoon, Evening, Anytime	Nashville	Rachael	Anderson	Kindergarten	No	0	Yes	An ideal school experience is one that caters to one's learning style, allows for small class sizes that renders the attention each student may/will need, that offers other opportunities for children to grow (extra work, etc.).
2/8/2025 21:32:12	sharethac@gmail.com	Sharetha	Jones	6153001330	Morning	Smyrna	Nylah	CROCKETT	7th Grade	Yes	4 or more	Yes	I need in tune teachers that are loving and supportive

Timestamp	Email Address	Nombre de la madre / tutor.	Nombre del padre / tutor	Apellido del padre/tutor	Número de teléfono del padre/tutor	El mejor tiempo para llamar	¿En qué ciudad del condado de Rutherford vive o está más cerca?	Nombre del estudiante	Apellido del estudiante	Nivel de grado académico en agosto de 2025	¿Hay hermanos?	¿Cuantos hermanos?	Apoyo a Novus SMART Academy y la elección de escuela con la intención de inscribirme.	Si pudieras diseñar la experiencia escolar ideal para tu hijo o hijos, ¿cómo sería? Por favor, comparte tantos detalles específicos como sea posible.
1/23/2025 15:13:55	karen.echavez27@gmail.com	cristian		echavez	6159676880	Tarde	Smyrna	ian	echavez	Jardin de infancia	No	1-2	Si	q aprendan mucho mucbisimo y sobre todo enseñar a los ninos respetarse uno a los otro y quererse mucho

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
2/3/2024	jherhonn@gmail.com	Ebony	Paige	6155937231	Rutherford County Resident	Educational	More intervention that allows for fun and innovative ways to learn
5/12/2024	bjohnson@mscc.edu	Brelinda	Johnson	615-220-7970	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Create more student readiness for college through academic program exposure
5/13/2024	klchew1@aol.com	Kristina	Chew	6159712674	Rutherford County Resident	Community Parternship	Well i never heard of this school till this survey but I want to learn more and see how I can support this school.
5/13/2024	cameron@facilityresourcecenter.com	Cameron	Quick	480-217-5881	Metro Nashville Resident	I support as a community member.	Provide a quality option for learning...sounds basic, but it's huge.
5/13/2024	andreaceesay54@gmail.com	Andrea	Coleman	9014933644	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Create a sense of belongingness
5/13/2024	tbemus30@gmail.com	Tawana	Harper	414-678-8755	Rutherford County Resident	Board Member Interest, I support as a community member.	I want to see kids truly happy! Schools that have rigorous academics, joy factor and a partnership with the community. I want students to be able to learn life skills to be able to thrive in a diverse world.
5/13/2024	sherrill.stratford@gmail.com	Sherrill	Stratford	6157148506	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Community Parternship, I support as a community member.	I would prioritize home visits and highly encourage and reward parent teacher partnerships.
5/13/2024	jcole@lavergnetn.gov	Jason	Cole	6153083565	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	More active and engaging education for students
5/14/2024	dnkadeba@hotmail.com	Daniel	Kadeba	9318013380	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Community Partnership, Donations and/or Sponsorships, I support as a community member.	More parents involvement
5/14/2024	brittnee.kennedy@gmail.com	Brittnee	Kennedy	8018978993	Rutherford County Resident	Board Member Interest, I support as a community member.	Consistency in upholding student academic and behavioral expectations: strong teachers; diverse school community
5/14/2024	mariahnp@icloud.com	Mariah	Phillips	6159877620	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	More a focus on understanding history and its impact today.
5/14/2024	everhartpl@gmail.com	Priscilla	Everhart	205-529-9412	New York	Board Member Interest, I support as a community member.	Build intentional community to schools connections, beyond the school providing wraparound services.
5/14/2024 12:24:28	christie0113@gmail.com	Christie	Harris	901-279-9789	Shelby County	Donations and/or Sponsorships, I support as a community member.	I would engage students by going beyond the textbook and classroom setting. Introduction to different learning environments early on can positively impact those who struggle within a classroom setting. I refer to the Albert Einstein quote "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life thinking that it is stupid."
5/15/2024 8:49:00	zaiathombre@gmail.com	Zaia	Thombre	4192775678	text only/email	Community Partnership	more international travel.
5/16/2024 10:06:15	phambrick@ryanhomes.com	Pierre	Hambrick	615-346-9559	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Market the positive impact of our educators with student to create community awareness.
5/16/2024 10:17:57	bradtammen@gmail.com	Brad	Tammen	615-788-9991	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Leadership development for parents
5/16/2024 10:25:08	bscales72@gmail.com	Barbara	Scales	615-396-7054	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Introduce kids to professionals who represent their community to increase representation as they look for what types of careers to think about for the future
5/16/2024 10:32:02	d.curtze@roseconstruction.com	David	Curtze	615-898-8370	Metro Nashville Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Encourage Parents to build wealth throuh home ownership to enhance wealth to secure opportunities for parent to have safety nets for college tuition.
5/16/2024 10:38:34	denise@murfreesborolawyer.com	Denise	Kimberly	615-890-1099	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Introduce kids to reading more complex books to earlier than 6th grade
5/16/2024 16:43:43	chelsierbennett@gmail.com	Chelsie	Bennett	(615) 557-6932	Rutherford County Resident	Donations and/or Sponsorships, I support as a community member., What does Community Partnership look like?	Because I was positively affected by attending an elementary school outside of my zoned area, I love the idea of more children having the option to expand their horizons in Rutherford County.
5/17/2024 21:32:47	adrienne.alford@tn.gov	Andrienne	Alford	423-290-8036	Shelby County	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Dr. Sagar has a compelling vision and school model that students in Rutherford County. I believe this model will be a positive addition to the community.
5/17/2024 21:34:21	bharvey@kdgi.solutions	Brandon	Harvey	901-568-1500	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Had the opportunity to meet with Jeremy Sager and I am excited about the school and the impact it will make in our community.
5/17/2024 21:36:34	chelsie.bennett22@gmail.com	Chelsie	Bennett	615-557-6932	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager and I worked in Nashville schools and I am rooting for him and the work he wishes to bring to our community. Growing up in Murfreesboro, I see the value this school will add to our community.
5/17/2024 21:39:13	cwayolandacunningham@gmail.com	Yolanda	Cunningham	615-973-1136	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	I live in the Smyrna and I am excited to hear that a new school is coming to the area to make a difference in our school system. Jeremy spoke to me about being a board member but I have too many commitments in the community already. This will be a positive school and I look forward to supporting in the future.
5/17/2024 21:41:35	echelleady1@yahoo.com	Dr. Echell	Eady	615-427-0446	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	I was excited to join Dr. Sager and his team as a founding board member, but my new positon at MTSU presented as as conflict of interest. However, I see Novus as a positive addition to our community. In my new role, I am sure that we will support Novus in the future.
5/17/2024 21:44:12	eric.meriwether@nm.com	Eric	Meriwether	615-691-2378	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Jeremy Sager has a great vision for support our community through education. Although I cannot commit asa board member, I see opportunities to offer financial literacy support to families once the school opens. This will be a positive contribution to our families who need more options.
5/17/2024 21:47:07	gfancher@gmail.com	Gabriel	Fancher	615-445-5073	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Sager, sharing his vision for bring Novus to our county. I believe this school will support some of the challeges and contribute to the success in our school community. I look forward to see this school open in 2025.
5/17/2024 21:49:49	ron@eaglecommunications.net	Ron	Young	615-278-9896	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Jeremy has a great plan for his school. My company can support with technology and communication services. Families need this school.
5/17/2024 21:53:16	laurab@votelaurabohling.com	Laura	Bohling	615-624-6191	Schedule a meeting.	I support as a community member.	I was introduced to Jeremy by one of his board members and I am inspired by his desire to support education in our community. I believe this school will be a positive addtion to our community, giving families more options to choose the best schools they want.
5/17/2024 21:55:36	lenniob@gmail.com	Delennio	Bond	615-772-7285	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Families need more option. I support this school and belive it will help with better zoning and reduce overcrowding. I children deserve better.
5/17/2024 21:58:35	mhrussellpointer@gmail.com	Russell	Pointer	615-924-3117	Metro Nashville Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	As a Pastor, I support this school and believe it will respond to many of the existing challenges in a positive way. Students deserve the best education and I believe this school will do just that.

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5/17/2024 22:02:16	treyferguson15@gmail.com	Trey	Feguson	615-397-2063	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe this school is give students an education that I wish I could have received.
5/17/2024 22:05:02	marccalvin96@gmail.com	Lamarcus	Calvin	601-316-6600	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I had the chance to work with Dr. Sager in Memphis and Metro Schools and he is a very hard worker. His vision to support students in our community does not come as a surprise. Dr. Sager has the remedy to support schools in our Murfreesboro community.
5/18/2024 10:13:46	latarsha.white4@gmail.com	Latarsha	White	9018309810	Williamson County	Board Member Interest	Project based learning for students and parent workshops
5/19/2024 20:47:40	jessicabrown_31@yahoo.com	Jessica	Brown	9014282044	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Advocate for Black and brown children, look at ways to bridge the gap between low performing students and their classmates
8/28/2024 11:57:00	jaylafunches@gmail.com	Jayla	Funches	7692330441	Rutherford County Resident	Board Member Interest	I would include phonics in the curriculum, learning how to sound out words is a fundamental reading tool ! And to teach children cursive writing is important for signing their names!
8/30/2024 20:05:02	prenticesims@gmail.com	Prentice	Sims	6293358772	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Have after school tutoring
8/30/2024 21:25:03	arneda.sims@gmail.com	Arneda	Sims	6153511901	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Before & After school tutoring
1/23/2025 16:56:15	ramyshoukry_86@yahoo.com	Ramy	Nassif	6157435859	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	NA
1/24/2025 16:35:19	rverdin@mscc.edu	Regina	Verdin	985-413-2992	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As a parent and educator, I am in 100% support of Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 16:40:48	beckyevreniadis@yahoo.com	Rebecca	Evreniadis	615-516-4078	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Bringing a Charter school to the La Vergne/Smyrna area is an excellent choice for our children. This would only provide a positive impact on not only the children/families but also the city for allowing more opportunities, opportunities that other cities currently have. Every family should be provided with options for schooling without paying thousands of dollars a year for an education. With the current overcrowding children are not getting the education that they so desire and need. The child to teacher ratio makes learning very difficult in turn causing behavior issues for children that need more one on one attention, a charter could provide this as well as specialized learning in more creative ways. The standard curriculum works for a large majority of children but certainly not all children. All children should be provided learning to fit their needs whether it be in a book or more hands on, public school does not allow much room for this. I have a high school student that does well in public school but my other children would have benefited had we had Novus. Many situations show that charter schools run like private school, many children are denied access for lower grades, financial situations, etc. Putting a charter school and more specifically Novus in La Vergne/Smyrna will open doors for children that otherwise would not have an opportunity to attend a more specialized school. Not all children learn the same, not all children learn as quickly as others or with chaos around them, take these children out and put them in Novus and you will see an average or even below average student rise to the top! I truly hope that you put the children first when deciding on Novus, our kids are our future so with out proper education in the beginning can you imagine our future...
1/24/2025 16:42:29	katiebug41346@gmail.com	Katlynne	Sims	404-428-7545	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member., Prospective Parent	Charter school for the win!
1/24/2025 16:44:24	mhrussellpointer@gmail.com	Russell	Pointer	615-924-3117	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As a Pastor, I support this school and believe it will respond to many of the existing challenges in a positive way. Students deserve the best education and I believe this school will do just that.
1/24/2025 16:45:47	realtormwilliams@gmail.com	615-336-7281	Marcus	Williams	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As a real estate professional and resident of Murfreesboro, I have witnessed the rapid growth of my community before my very eyes. As the community continues to grow, the needs of the community become more diverse. This growth impacts families in so many ways and having a quality school option or rezoning should be the least of their worries. I support Dr. Sager and Novus because I believe that it will give parents the balance they are looking for in schools, where children are fully supported and not just a number. Our schools are getting larger and larger, and still overcrowded. Hopefully this school will help to reduce some of our challenges and keep quality education as the #1 priority.
1/24/2025 16:46:41	kesham85@gmail.com	Kesha	Jones	731-609-7560	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As a resident of Rutherford County, I chose KIPP schools in Nashville for my children because they were better school options and were better prepared to go to college. I believe Dr. Sager has a great vision and will bring the type of school our families need in this community.
1/24/2025 16:47:42	jessicabrown_31@yahoo.com	Jessica	Brown	901-428-2044	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As an advocate for Black and Brown children, I look at ways to bridge the gap between low performing students and their classmates. This school will level the playing field and give all students a chance.
1/24/2025 16:49:12	chasitiesgoodman@gmail.com	Chasitie	Goodman	615-836-9046	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As an educator who has worked in both traditional public and public charter schools, I feel that families should be able to choose where they want to send their children to school when private school is not an affordable option. I support this school and its leader because I have seen his work as a principal and he will definitely make difference in our community.
1/24/2025 16:50:26	dostraughter1@gmail.com	Doris	Straughter	615-578-7584	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Jeremy is a faithful member of my church and serves with his whole heart. I am excited to see him serve in the community by bringing another school to help with some of our issues. As a member of this community, I think this will be a blessing to families and I cannot wait to see this school open.
1/24/2025 16:51:34	chelsie.bennett22@gmail.com	Chelsie	Bennett	615-557-6932	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager and I worked in Nashville schools and I am rooting for him and the work he wishes to bring to our community. Growing up in Murfreesboro, I see the value this school will add to our community. Because I was positively affected by attending an elementary school outside of my zoned area, I love the idea of more children having the option to expand their horizons in Rutherford County.

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1/24/2025 16:52:27	jonesgeraldsr@gmail.com	Gerald	Jones	615-414-8224	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager has always had a vision for opening a school. As a successful businessman, he often comes to me and asks questions related to making the right business moves. I am excited that he is pursuing this venture in our community and he is pushing to the very end. Our students need more options and families deserve to choose.
1/24/2025 16:53:19	sonjawil16@gmail.com	Christy	Williams	615-243-1208	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager is one of my clients and he loves children and making sure they succeed. He has a good heart and has been working to open this school for a long time. We are ready to see it open and to support him like he supports our businesses in our community.
1/24/2025 16:54:26	thamax03@yahoo.com	Austin	Petty	615-603-6341	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager shared why he wants to bring a new school to our community and I support his vision. I think it's important for families to choose where they want their children to go to school without overcrowded classrooms and rezoning inconveniences.
1/24/2025 16:55:41	ethanwilliams092703@gmail.com	Ethan	Williams	615-919-3854	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager was my Assistant Principal in middle school and now I am in college. When I was in 8th grade, Dr. Sager saw my potential and he always pushed me to go to the next level. Even now, he still reaches out to me to check on me to make sure I am doing well and focused in college. I am thankful for Dr. Sager and can't wait to see his school open so that he can inspire more students like me.
1/24/2025 16:56:45	chelseatlocascio@gmail.com	Chelsea	LoCascio	908-246-8170	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	We need more space and options for parents and their kids. The Novus Smart Academy would be a great addition to our community.
1/24/2025 16:58:02	awjoseph314@gmail.com	Aaron	Joseph	989-837-6354	Michigan	I support as a community member.	I believe that a charter school would help fix the overcrowding of the schools in Rutherford. School overcrowding damages the kids ability to learn in an effective environment, and I think that making a charter school would help kids grow in their education more effectively.
1/24/2025 16:59:04	briannamerryman16@gmail.com	Brianna	Merryman	615-568-2638	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Looking into charter school for the further and noticed there isn't one close by in Rutherford county specifically Smyrna or Lavergne area. I would love to see one built in the community as others would as well!
1/24/2025 17:00:05	dodgeit629@gmail.com	James	Evreniadis	615-556-8566	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Kids deserve opportunities and choices, having a charter school in our community provides both. Why would this be denied if it helps 10 kids by being more creative, engaging and less kids in each class.... we need it! Overcrowding is an understatement and if Rutherford County won't provide ample space, more teachers for smaller classes then we must do this!
1/24/2025 17:01:25	saragreg02@yahoo.com	Sarah	Mayes	615-471-1465	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Public schools have become nurserys, teachers sit all day on the phone and hand out work they do not intend to teach. Charter school will bring teachers back to caring and kids learning.
1/24/2025 17:02:36	robinsoncathey6@gmail.com	Cathey	Robinson	615-280-2038	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	All opportunities should be offered to all cities/states. Smaller towns need better schools and this could be just the right fit!
1/24/2025 17:05:00	mistysmetier@gmail.com	Misty	Dickmeyer	615-542-1321	Montgomery County	I support as a community member.	As a grandparent of four children in Rutherford County and a previous resident and parent of children who were raised and graduated in Rutherford County, I feel it is in the best interest of the families. We have grown by leaps and bounds. Multiple changes have been forced upon parents. We need options such as these to protect our children and allow opportunities to thrive in all the growing pains. My children were forced into two different schools after zoning changes made, missed out on elections that had received the previous year for sports, clubs, etc. do to zoning changes. All for them to change their mind a year or two later, and move us back. We need options here.
1/24/2025 17:06:17	crfrazier1mail@gmail.com	Charles	Frazier	615-870-9937	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member., Active Board Member	My personal experience with education has been transformative. I found my passion for learning later in life, and it has since become a driving force behind my commitment to Novus SMART Academy. Our goal is to foster a love for learning in K-8 students from a young age. I also strongly believe that collaborating with public charter schools is crucial in offering extra learning opportunities and addressing the current growth challenges in our county.
1/24/2025 17:07:34	mhlangston@att.net	Mildred	Langston	901-262-7340	Shelby County	Family Friend	I am in favor of the Novus SMART Academy because of: College and Career Pathways, two teacher classrooms and the SMART Model - Science, Math, Arts Research with emphasis on Technology.
1/24/2025 17:09:31	tstrode81@gmail.com	Tony	Strode	615-496-5755	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I want to show support for Novus SMART because I believe that students in elementary school should start learning about college so that they ready after.
1/24/2025 17:10:47	Ellahouston178@gmail.com	Ella	Jones-Houston	901-304-0160	Shelby County	Friend of Novus	Dr. Jeremy Sager has outstanding goals for this charter school with the two teacher classrooms, along with the Extended School Year. Dr. Sager has over 15 years in education and is well known and respected.
1/24/2025 17:12:22	tbrks9@hotmail.com	Theta	Burks	901-503-6149	Shelby County	Family	I am in full support of Novus SMART Academy because their teaching and learning concept will help to build and expand the minds, hearts and character of students through education and high quality instructions. All students should be afforded this type of education as early as their minds will allow. Once Dr. Sager opens in Rutherford County, it is my sincere hope that Novus Smart Academy will be expand to Shelby County as well.
1/24/2025 17:13:22	jbmcmurry@gmail.com	Joan	McMurry	615-485-2428	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	What a great alternative for learning. It will be great to have other options for the community.
1/24/2025 17:14:18	rmmcmurry@gmail.com	Robert	McMurry	615-512-0663	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am excited for the growth to come. It is needed.
1/24/2025 17:15:31	rnaldcrawleyjr@gmail.com	Ronald	Crawley, Jr.	617-716-9897	N/A	Colleague	It is always great to have additional quality alternatives. It helps everyone to up their game and do better. Novus is first class learning.
1/24/2025 17:17:08	kerrymajors@tds.net	Kerry	Majors	615-988-5871	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I support Novus Smart Academy because it will be great for kids to learn and grow.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 17:18:32	paularcollick@gmail.com	Paula	Collick	615-319-1534	Montgomery County	Community Partnership	I am so excited to support Novus Smart Academy. It is a wonderful alternative. A new innovative and fresh learning experience for the community. I work in this market and spend lots of time with parents of children who are looking for different and new options for their children of color. This is an offering that is missing in the public school sector. Diversity and Inclusion is a must-haves for children to thrive and grow in today's society. Every child matters. Dr. Sager has experienced all of this and will be a great role model. The plan is very clear. The goal is doable. And the vision is very clear. I can see it.
1/24/2025 17:19:19	davidparkes@gmail.com	David	Parks	615-349-6986	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am looking forward to supporting Novus Academy. I live and work in this community. It would be good to see this kind of growth for the greater good of Academics & Learning
1/24/2025 17:24:48	cherylkingsmith811@gmail.com	Cheryl	King-Smith	901-491-4987	Shelby County	Friend of Novus	It is needed.
1/24/2025 17:33:13	murphychristina4582@gmail.com	Christina	Murphy	901-315-7662	Shelby	Friend	Strong vision and this is something new that our children need.
1/24/2025 17:34:45	coleyta2017@gmail.com	Tarsha	Cokey	615-578-2653	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Too much focus is put on searching students instead of teaching students. We need schools that care about Black and Brown kids across the board. La Vergne High School has terrible leadership who cares more about themselves than the students. The administration has changed so much and if it weren't for the counselor, we would not have made it. There were subs all the time and teachers in core subjects in graduation-required courses quitting in the middle of the school year. We need Novus SMART Academy to help change the systems in Rutherford County.
1/24/2025 17:35:29	mehall25@hotmail.com	Mary	Jackson	615-972-3718	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I'm in favor of Novus SMART school because I feel that this school will give parents more options for their child/children's education in Rutherford County.
1/24/2025 17:37:06	aje.frazier@outlook.com	Aje	Frazier	6150710-7003	Metro Nashville Resident	Propsective Parent	I support Novus SMART Academy and believe they will be a great asset to the Rutherford County School District.
1/24/2025 17:37:57	ouraykoko@yahoo.com	Anthony	Verdin	985-413-2890	Coffee County	Friend	I am a supporter of charter schools.
1/24/2025 17:39:23	chrisandbella1025@gmail.com	Christopher	Verdin	985-413-7908	Coffee County	Friend	I am a supporter of charter schools.
1/24/2025 17:40:43	misstami8@gmail.com	Tami	Verdin	985-413-7774	Coffee County	Friend	I am a supporter of charter schools.
1/24/2025 17:42:38	misselise985@gmail.com	Elise	Verdin	931-222-5553	Coffee	Friend	I am a supporter of charter schools.
1/24/2025 17:43:39	lflatt@mscc.edu	Larry	Flatt	931-205-4436	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership	Due to the over-capacity situation in Rutherford County, Novus SMART Academy will help in reducing the load at current schools.
1/24/2025 17:45:16	RWWalltogether@gmail.com	Rita	Webber-Williams	901-358-3132	Shelby	Friend	I support all educational facilities as there is a need.
1/24/2025 17:46:23	tmillican@mscc.edu	Tony	Millican	334-301-4325	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Open Novus Academy in fall 2026 and grow each year by one academic year, reaching K-12 capacity in 12 years.
1/24/2025 17:52:39	mrsalissaroebuck@gmail.com	Alissa	Roebuck	615-967-7057	Williamson	Friend	I am writing to express my strong support for the charter application of Novus SMART Academy, which is scheduled to open in Fall 2026. As an employee of Motlow and a member of the Rutherford County community, I am excited about the positive impact this new charter school will have on our local education system. With Rutherford County schools experiencing significant overcrowding, Novus SMART Academy will provide a much-needed solution by offering additional educational opportunities in Smyrna. This initiative is especially timely, as it aims to grow into a full K-12 institution over the next 12 years, addressing the growing needs of our students and easing the pressures on existing schools. The planned partnership between Novus SMART Academy and Motlow College is particularly promising. It will create valuable synergies, enhance educational resources, and support the academic development of students in our area. I strongly encourage the state board of education to support the charter application for Novus SMART Academy. This new school will be a vital addition to our community, and I am confident that it will provide significant benefits to both students and the broader Rutherford County area. Thank you for considering my support for this important initiative. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.
1/24/2025 17:53:56	kzsbailey@yahoo.com	Kevin	Bailey	662-907-0042	Shelby	Colleague	I wish to support Novus SMART Academy. The school leader is dedicated to the development of the whole child. The school is committed to addressing scholars emotional needs in order to help them excel in their academics. Scholars will enjoy a school environment where lessons are taught to their particular learning style. I am eager to see scholars thriving at Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 17:55:25	adriannemjohnson30@gmail.com	Adrianne	Johnson	731-426-3108	Montgomery	Board Member Interest, Friend of Novus	I'm excited about Novus Smart School. I believe it will be an asset to the Rutherford County Community. What the school represents is Amazing and I believe in their vision and mission. I'm excited to see them excel.

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1/24/2025 17:57:53	yaimara@me.com	Yaimara	Wheaton	915-838-6383	Buffalo, NY	Colleague	I am writing to express my strong support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy in your community. Now more than ever, we need innovative educational models that not only address the academic needs of our students but also foster leadership and representation within our schools. Novus SMART Academy offers a visionary approach that emphasizes STEM excellence, social-emotional learning, and the development of 21st-century skills-critical areas where our students need growth and opportunity. In particular, the leadership of Novus SMART Academy brings much-needed representation to our community. With Black leaders at the helm, the school will serve as an empowering institution where students of color can see themselves reflected in positions of influence and authority. This representation is vital for our young people, who need role models that inspire and guide them to achieve their full potential. The model proposed by Novus SMART Academy is truly exceptional, blending rigorous academics with real-world applications and a deep commitment to equity. This school has the potential to close achievement gaps and provide a high-quality education to students who have historically been underserved.
1/24/2025 17:58:49	joneswrightm@gmail.com	Michelle	Jones-Wright	901-481-9130	Shelby	Colleague	Charter schools allow innovation and support the whole community. Diversity is needed and should be allowed during schooling.
1/24/2025 17:59:59	flake@american.edu	Sherita	Flake	901-335-9856	N/A	Colleague	The use of the SMART Model ensures students will be competitive on a global level and college ready.
1/24/2025 18:00:52	alesha.harmon@gmail.com	Alesha	Harmon	615-720-7798	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	I believe that Novus SMART Academy will enhance the options for Rutherford County students as all families have the right to choose a school environment that best supports the needs of their children.
1/24/2025 18:02:37	klbeam@gmail.com	Kristy	Beam	470-419-9990	Georgia	BES Colleague	I have had the opportunity to watch the design process of Novus SMART Academy. Jeremy Sager, the founder, is a dedicated, competent educator who has designed a school to serve the students of Rutherford County well.
1/24/2025 18:03:31	slrhall75@gmail.com	Stacey	Robinson	901-283-3526	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Novus SMART Academy promises to fill in the gaps that are lacking in modern education. Dr. Sager is a true visionary with a passion for enriching the lives of children, families, and the community holistically. As an advocate for quality education in our communities, Novus SMART Academy has my full support.
1/24/2025 18:04:38	candice.r.eddins@gmail.com	Candice	Eddins	901-496-0520	Shelby	Colleague	I believe that Dr. Sager has a solid plan with growing our youth at Novus SMART Academy. I am excited to see the success of the institution and hope that he opens a location in Memphis soon!
1/24/2025 18:06:17	edlbrown901@yahoo.com	Edward	Brown	901-281-9865	Shelby	Friend	I support Novus Smart Academy because its leadership has a deep commitment to nurturing each child's potential. Their dedication to personalized learning and high-quality teachers creates a truly enriching educational experience for every student.
1/24/2025 18:07:21	jholmes1962@yahoo.com	Judy	Holmes	901-482-6432	Shelby	Colleague	The school will be lead by the most dedicated educator in Tennessee. He is vision lead and totally dedicated. He wants to make sure that every student that attends this school will be able to soar in whatever direction they choose.
1/24/2025 18:08:26	adgolden12@gmail.com	Aaron	Golden	662-316-4479	Shelby	Friend	I am in full support of Novus Smart Academy. With there being two-teacher classrooms, this will allow not only for every child to receive the attention they need but also it will promote a safer environment for the teacher and children.
1/24/2025 18:09:34	joshrstanley@gmail.com	Joshua	Stanley	901-281-8325	Shelby	Colleague	I have a niece and nephew who live in the district and I'd love for them to attend the school. Novus SMART academy brings additional choice to parents in Rutherford County. Parents have a right to have the best options of schools for their children regardless of their zip code.
1/24/2025 18:10:44	jamiedunlap2002@yahoo.com	Jamie	Dunlap	901-438-0472	Metro Nashville Resident	Former Classmate & Current Colleague	I am in favor of Novus SMART Academy. As a former classmate and colleague of the founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager, I know first hand of his character, leadership, professionalism, experience, and determination. I know that this school will be a beneficial addition to options for families that live in Rutherford County. It will be an opportunity for students to be nurtured in their academic and behavioral growth in a two teacher classroom with STEM integration, and with College and Career focused instruction.
1/24/2025 18:14:45	dillarddoc@gmail.com	Doc	Dillard	704-408-3869	N/A	Colleague	Dr. Sager is a consistent education advocate and leader. I've seen him do great work in the city of Memphis. He has a passion for supporting students and I'm excited to see the possibilities his school will instill within his community.
1/24/2025 18:15:31	brittnyr.thomas@gmail.com	Brittny	Thomas	615-598-4931	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am in support of Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 18:17:14	jchris@kw.com	Christian	Hill	901-736-0268	Williamson	Board Member	I am excited to stand behind the addition of this amazing Academy to Rutherford County not living far from the area I do find value in uplifting our youth to create more opportunities For them to succeed.
1/24/2025 18:18:13	iteachlit08@gmail.com	Tracey	Snydor	213-291-5203	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I recommend Novus Smart Academy for its innovative approach to education. The school's unique focus on the SMART model, college and career pathways, and expanded electives truly prepares students for success in both higher education and the workforce. Novus promises to be a forward-thinking institution dedicated to nurturing well-rounded, future-ready children.
1/24/2025 18:19:34	missyt931@gmail.com	Tracy	Waller	931-206-1806	Montgomery County	Board Member Interest	The mission and impact this facility will provide is essential for the development and growth of the industry and community.
1/24/2025 18:20:50	littlelearnersu@gmail.com	TeNeka	Kennedy	931-919-2482	Montgomery	Education Advocate	The children in the aligned area should have a balanced offering for children not electing to attend the County schools. This school would offer beneficial electives for this industry.

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1/24/2025 18:22:01	almamagee2014@icloud.com	Alma	Magee	615-397-5906	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	I really do want this school to succeed. I know Dr. Jeremy Sager and his heart for children. His commitment to seeing our children received the best education they can is unmatched. This school will have a character education focus. As a Math educator, the SMART model really impresses me. I can't wait to see this school thrive.
1/24/2025 18:23:37	bjones@invictus-nash.org	Brenda	Jones	615-438-0551	Metro Nashville Resident	School Founder & Colleague	I am in support of approval of Novus SMART Academy. They met all expectations of the rubric based on the review from their local school board last year. They seek to bring a model that has a focus on character education and the SMART Model (Science, Math, Arts/Electives, Research, emphasis on Technology). This innovative approach would add to the educational options and improve a growing population. In addition, it is led by a founder who over 15 years in education. He has served in K-12 setting.
1/24/2025 18:24:33	Stephencostout@yahoo.com	Stephen	Stout	901-218-7414	Shelby	Friend	I support the establishment of Novus SMART Academy, because it focuses on both academic excellence and character building.
1/24/2025 18:25:47	ehertilien@bes.org	Erline	Hertilien	281-901-0816	N/A	Community Partnership, BES Governance Coach	I am in full support of Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 18:27:00	Rev_AL357@hotmail.com	Almetric	Terry	615-479-1646	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	I feel it is imperative to have an academic institute that capsulates students from multiethnic households with extraordinary gifts, students who thrive better learning in a nontraditional classroom setting. I believe Novus will create an ethos for those students to thrive. Novus will develop a rubric that will include academics, SEL components, a restorative mindset, and will involve community partners/engagement to nurture not only the whole child but support the whole family.
1/24/2025 18:28:01	kwelcomern@icloud.com	Kenneth	Welcome	912-596-5458	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Colleague	I strongly support the Novus SMART Academy's application. The school's focus on College & Career Pathways, an Extended School Year, Two-Teacher Classrooms, Character Education, and the innovative SMART Model will provide an exceptional education for K-8 students. With Dr. Jeremy Sager's proven leadership and commitment to every child's success, Novus SMART Academy is poised to make a significant positive impact in the community.
1/24/2025 18:29:08	kerrymajors@tds.net	Kerry	Majors	615-337-9792	Wilson	Colleague of Board Member	I support other options for parents to choose from. it should be their choice, not the school board's. This charter vision is clear and a diverse environment is needed.
1/24/2025 18:29:58	amandaharper925@gmail.com	Amanda	Harper	615-689-9281	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	We support Novus Smart Academy.
1/24/2025 18:31:03	robynt4233@gmail.com	Robyn	Majors	615-856-5772	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend	I support Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 18:32:04	holman453@gmail.com	Calvin	Holman	901-653-4992	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Friend of Novus	This is a good school and we need to move forward. This academic program is a good program that focuses on character education and technology to prepare the children for the future.
1/24/2025 18:41:03	asclay@gmail.com	Akira	Clay-Hill	901-736-0441	Williamson	Spouse of Board Member	Creating a charter school that supports the community will be a great add for us all. Understanding the high standards and exemplary qualifications set for the leaders will ensure our scholars are well equipped for the years ahead.
1/24/2025 18:42:48	marisa.cannata@gmail.com	Marisa	Cannata	615-612-9861	Metro Nashville Resident	Community Partnership, Colleague	I am writing in support of Novus SMART Academy. As a professor of education policy, I am excited to be a part of this school. I am inspired by the mission to provide rigorous education that is asset-based and inquiry-based, and will develop the whole child. I am particularly excited about the two-teacher model that will provide a ratio of 12:1 with two teachers or teacher-residents in every classroom. With a curriculum that is aligned to TN state standards and a data-rich governing approach, I am confident the school will be positioned to ensure student success. As a scholar, I have studied charter schools for two decades, and specifically what makes for successfully starting a new charter school. Through this process, I am confident that Novus SMART Academy has a plan for instructional and curricular success, strong operations, and effective governing structures that will ensure a strong and sustainable academic model and school. We are eager to partner with the county to serve all students in Rutherford County and help students meet their potential.
1/24/2025 18:44:27	Plummerk50@gmail.com	Kimberly	Plummer	901-833-1813	Shelby	Friend	Novus SMART Academy is set to lead the future of Charter schools in the state of Tennessee with proven leadership and strong academic strategies to challenge the upcoming generation to excel in Math, Science, and Engineering. The planning process and research has focused solely on preparing students for the future, and choosing a strong organizational structure to compete among leading school districts across the nation.
1/24/2025 18:46:18	smoran2006@gmail.com	Sean	Moran	615-619-6919	Metro Nashville Resident	Possible Prospective Parent	Having additional options is always a good thing. My home district offers a terrible school option that has TCAP scores below the state average. Having the opportunity to choose a school that competes with my school district should help everyone or at the least leave those who don't want to do their work nor behave in schools that can't kick you out.
1/24/2025 18:47:26	lenniob@gmail.com	Delennio	Bond	615-772-7285	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Families need more options. I support this school and believe it will help with better zoning and reduce overcrowding. Our children deserve better.
1/24/2025 18:48:40	matt.cannata@gmail.com	Matthew	Cannata	615-708-8468	Metro Nashville Resident	Community Partnership, Colleague	I write in support of Novus SMART Academy. I am very impressed the the mission of the school to provide rigorous instruction and more options for Rutherford County students. The school has a strong team and competencies to ensure a strong start to the school and ensure success for all students.
1/24/2025 18:52:11	elaine.covington@bgcrc.net	Elaine	Covington	615-473-6180	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I attended the RCS Board meeting where they voted to deny Novus SMART Academy because of fiscal impact to the district las year. One of the Board members in favor of charter schools made the statement that Rutherford County is growing so fast and unable to keep up with the rapid growth and the number of school buildings needed. Charter schools would be helpful in fixing this issue. From a personal standpoint, I agree that charter schools would help to support the overcrowding of current RCS schools. I have been in Rutherford County since 2001 and this is definitely a problem, which is why I totally agree that we should give charter schools, such as Novus SMART Academy and its leaders, a chance.

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1/24/2025 18:53:14	keounb@yahoo.com	Keoun	Braden	615-438-2146	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe in Dr. Jeremy Sager's vision of creating Novus Smart Academy in our community because it will greatly benefit current and future students on their college and career paths. Dr. Sager's expertise will provide valuable support for academic success and character education. His positive qualities are exactly what our school system needs so that students feel known and loved. I have full trust in Dr. Sager and his plan to establish Novus Smart Academy in our community.
1/24/2025 18:54:09	denise@murfreesborolawyer.com	Denise	Kimberly	615-890-1099	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe this school will do a great job of introducing kids to reading more complex books earlier than 6th grade.
1/24/2025 18:54:57	treyferguson15@gmail.com	Trey	Ferguson	615-397-2063	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe this school will give students an education that I wish I could have received.
1/24/2025 18:56:16	rr@rrlifecoach.com	Rosland	Rhyne	615-568-7759	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I had a chance to meet Dr. Sager during one of my appointments in the community. He shared his vision for Novus SMART Academy and he has a great big heart to serve families in our community. I believe this school will be a blessing to many families. Dr. Sager and his team have put in the hard work and his heart is in the right place. I trust his work will also support the rapid growth of our community.
1/24/2025 18:57:12	marccalvin96@gmail.com	Lamarcus	Calvin	601-316-6600	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I had the chance to work with Dr. Sager in Memphis and Metro Schools and he is a very hard worker. His vision to support students in our community does not come as a surprise. Dr. Sager has the remedy to support schools in our Murfreesboro community.
1/24/2025 18:58:54	telisafranklin@gmail.com	Telisa	Franklin	901-281-7337	Shelby	Colleague	I have known Dr. Sager since he was in high school and he has always been a leader. When he shared his vision to open a public charter school in Rutherford County, I was not surprised. Dr. Sager has a big heart for serving others and he loves to support students by helping them tap into their fullest potential. Novus SMART Academy (K-8), like several charter schools in Tennessee, will be a beacon of light and joy for students and families. Some parents want smaller class sizes and this school will offer that experience with two teachers in every classroom. From what I am hearing, Rutherford County Schools are overcrowded and some of its Board members have been vocal about partnering with charter school to help with this challenge. Makes sense. The focus on college or career paths gives all students options that so many do not realize they have. I urge you, voting leaders, to approve this school for the sake of so many children that will be impacted in a phenomenal way through this school.
1/24/2025 19:01:50	cwayolandacunningham@gmail.com	Yolanda	Cunningham	615-973-1136	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I live in the Smyrna and I am excited to hear that a new school is coming to the area to make a difference in our school system. Jeremy spoke to me about being a board member but I have too many commitments in the community already. This will be a positive school and I look forward to supporting in the future.
1/24/2025 19:03:05	tbemus30@gmail.com	Tawana	Harper	414-678-8755	Rutherford County Resident	Board Member Interest, Colleague	I support because I want to see kids truly happy! Schools that have rigorous academics, joy factor and a partnership with the community. I want students to be able to learn life skills to be able to thrive in a diverse world and this school will do this. All of this will happen at Novus SMART Academy to support the whole-child.
1/24/2025 19:14:23	brittnee.kennedy@gmail.com	Brittnee	Kennedy	80-897-8993	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I support this school and its consistency in wanting to uphold student academic and behavioral expectations: strong teachers; diverse school community.
1/24/2025 19:15:19	jherhonn@gmail.com	Ebony	Paige	615-593-7231	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I support this school because it will provide more intervention that allows for fun and innovative ways to learn.
1/24/2025 19:17:15	echelleady1@yahoo.com	Echell	Eady	615-427-0446	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	Kindly accept this letter of support as Dr. Jeremy Sager seeks to develop Novus SMART Academy in Rutherford County, Tennessee. As a parent of three sons who all matriculated through Rutherford County Schools, I am especially supportive of a school concept such as Novus SMART Academy. Additionally, as an active member of the Rutherford County community, I'm excited at the prospect of another great academic choice for our families. Although my family and I have fond memories of many excellent Rutherford County Schools teachers and administrators, I believe that each of my sons could have benefitted from more culturally diverse instruction and leadership. I look forward to lending my support as a general citizen to this initiative. Furthermore, I plan to include Novus SMART Academy as I professionally seek STEM partnerships and opportunities for Middle Tennessee State University students and their instructors. Should you have questions or wish to arrange discussion regarding my level of support, please feel free to contact me directly at echelleady1@yahoo. com. Thank you.
1/24/2025 19:18:09	laurab@votelaurabohling.com	Laura	Bohling	615-624-6191	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I was introduced to Jeremy by one of his board members and I am inspired by his desire to support education in our community. I believe this school will be a positive addition to our community, giving families more options to choose the best schools they want.
1/24/2025 19:19:07	ron@eaglecommunications.net	Ron	Young	615-278-9896	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Jeremy has a great plan for his school. My company can support with technology and communication services. Families need this school.
1/24/2025 19:21:49	eric.meriwether@nm.com	Eric	Meriwether	615-691-2378	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Jeremy Sager has a great vision for support in our community through education. Although I cannot commit as a board member, I see opportunities to offer financial literacy support to families once the school opens. This will be a positive contribution to our families who need more options.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 19:23:12	marcia.smith86@icloud.com	Marcia	Smith	901-387-8644	N/A	Colleague	I believe in the mission and the objective of Novus SMART Academy. I am confident that Dr. Jeremy Sager will guide his teachers and staff with a strong foundation of knowledge, training, and support to effectively educate our kids. Dr. Sager has a reputation of educational excellence and leadership in all of his positions in the school sectors. Building Novus SMART Academy is Dr. Sager's dream to bridge the gap of education and grow our children. If granted his charter, I am confident he will achieve his goals, as he has done before.
1/24/2025 19:24:32	saradia.sd@gmail.com	Sara	Dia	678-751-7087	Rutherford County Resident	Board Member Interest, I support as a community member.	Novus SMART Academy will mirror the new diversity of their communities in Rutherford County. Novus SMART Academy will foster inclusion and multieducation to establish equitable opportunities in education. Jeremy Sager is a highly intelligent with a sophisticated sense of humor. Mr.Sager is a successful leader with unwavering integrity. He demonstrates self awareness, empathy and has a compelling vision to unite people and captivate hearts and minds of students. Moreover, Jeremy Sager articulates and executes purpose and goals.
1/24/2025 19:26:26	latarsha.white4@gmail.com	Latarsha	White	901-830-9810	Williamson	Board Member Interest, Colleague	I fully support Novus SMART Academy and its amazing founder and leader, Dr. Jeremy Sager. Dr. Sager was my school manager and coach on two occasions in my career, and he has mentored me on my path to school leadership. He is very serious about providing a quality education for students and supporting their families with resources. I have watched Dr. Sager get in the trenches with teachers in some of the hardest times, teach classes so that we wouldn't have to hire a substitute, and be the model of what he expected from staff. His patience for teachers and students is unparalleled, and he stands by his convictions to do what is best for students no matter what. As a former Science teacher, project based learning is a great way to engage students in the learning process for STEM, and Dr. Sager has shared what this will look like at Novus SMART Academy. This school will be a blessing to so many students in Rutherford County, and is definitely needed in Davidson County and West Tennessee. I hope this school opens and continues to grow state-wide. Our communities need more high-quality options across the board.
1/24/2025 19:27:30	bscales72@gmail.com	Barbara	Scales	615-396-7054	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	This school will introduce kids to professionals who represent their community to increase representation as they look for what types of careers to think about for the future. That's why I support this school.
1/24/2025 19:28:39	carmenlane@att.net	Carmen	Lane	240-217-7930	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	When Dr. Sager shared his vision for Novus SMART Academy, I was excited. Although all my children are grown, I have grandchildren and this is the type of school I think every child needs to learn and grow up as responsible adults.
1/24/2025 19:29:59	frances.bailey@usi.com	Frances	Bailey	615-716-9400	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	When Jeremy asked me to support his school and vision, I responded, "I got you". Jeremy and I went to church together in Memphis and I always invite him to my church in Murfreesboro now that I know we both live here. He is a bright young man who is serious about education and we need more men like him to support our children. I support this school and I cannot wait to see it open and all the great future leaders it will create in our community.
1/24/2025 19:30:59	demariohowardllc@gmail.com	DeMario	Howard	629-251-2298	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I have seen Dr. Sager and his school team out in the community sharing the mission of Novus SMART Academy. When he shared it with me, I was inspired and eager to figure out more ways to get this mission out in our community. We need more schools that are going to stand up and support our students and families in the right way. Dr. Sager has a good heart and he is a servant. We cannot wait to see the great things that will happen in our community when this school opens.
1/24/2025 19:32:24	ladariuschatman.agent@gmail.com	Ladarius	Chatman	901-581-3796	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager was one of my youth advisors growing up in church. Not only did he teach us how to live a Godly life as teenagers, but he cared about our success in school. I ran into him in the mall parking lot in Murfreesboro and that's when we exchanged information and he shared that he was starting a school in our community. Now that I have a family of my own, I want to ensure my son goes to a school where people care about him and his future just as much as Dr. Sager cared about me and my future. Novus SMART Academy will be a great school for students to learn and grow, feel safe, and be loved by the school leaders and staff. Let's get this school open!

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1/24/2025 19:34:26	rsagerguy@southwest.tn.edu	Rose	Guy	901-604-4588	Shelby	Family Member	As the mother of the CEO/Lead Founder, I have watched my son make countless sacrifices in order to support others. He has always been ambitious and supportive of others in their academic pursuits. When he told us that he was actually going to start a charter school, I was so excited and thought he was going to bring it to Shelby County, but his heart is in Rutherford County and he loves working with those students and families. As his school continues to grow and thrive, may be he will bring another great school to Shelby County to support our students and families. He never ceases to amaze me and I am sure this will happen. My grandson has always attended public charter schools and he is now a sophomore in high school. We knew traditional public schools were not for him at all. As a result, he has been given several opportunities to shine in the classroom and as an athlete. I believe in these schools and how they provide parents with better options that are tailored to the needs of their children. My son, Dr. Sager, has won several awards for his leadership in schools, and he has worked miracles in spaces that seemed impossible. Maybe I am a bit biased, but I believe in my son and his work ethic has proven that he has a high level of integrity to the job well and to do it right. He has a strong team supporting him, and I cannot wait to see the smiling faces of all the little ones that will attend this school on opening day and beyond. I support Novus SMART Academy and you should too. Thank you!
1/24/2025 19:36:28	sirrandyguy@yahoo.com	Randy	Guy	901-604-4768	Shelby	Family Member	My son has always been an overachiever and we always had high expectations for him, even as an adult. When he talked about opening a school, I saw the fear in his eyes, but the faith in his heart. We always taught our children that nothing beats failure but a try. And that you should never go through life wondering what could have been when you have the opportunity to make something happen. That's why we believe in Novus SMART Academy, most importantly, we believe in our son! This school will be a blessing to families in Rutherford County and help with overcrowding of schools, as my son has shared. With my background in IT, I believe focusing on Technology is a great way to prepare these students for the future and to teach them the value of technology so that they can use it for good. This has definitely been a process and we are so proud of our son and the work he is doing to change lives through education. To whom this may concern, let's get this school open and make a difference in the community.
1/24/2025 19:37:59	nacariamarie@gmail.com	NaCaria	GUy	901-431-7149	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Dr. Sager is my brother and I am excited to see Novus SMART Academy open. I am currently a college student and resident in Rutherford County, and I work in education with with students with special needs. There is a great need for this school and parents want smaller class sizes for their students, especially those with special needs. When I tell them about Novus, they get excited because they do not want to send them to schools in Murfreesboro. Some of them have chosen Rutherford Collegiate because they are open now. We wish Novus was open now too. I have attended several community engagement events with Novus SMART Academy and the team. They are really working hard to support students and families, even when some community members are not so nice. Dr. Sager has such a strong spirit of perseverance and rises above the negativity by focusing on the positive. He is a great model of what it means to have good character and I love that this school will focus on Character Education as part of its model.
1/24/2025 19:39:41	cguy1990@hotmail.com	Cameron	Guy	901-413-7232	Shelby	Family Member	I am proud to call Dr. Sager my big brother and he is the reason why we chose charter schools for my son who is now a sophomore in high school. I wish I had the opportunity to go to a charter school when I attended school because I see the positive impact these schools have made on my son. Although he likes to focus on being an athlete, his school made it very clear that he is a student first. That's important! I appreciate teachers seeing my son as more than an athlete because all Black boys won't go to the NBA or NFL. They need to know there are great college and career choices for them beyond sports. I believe that Novus SMART Academy will do the same in Rutherford County for Black and Brown children, and hopefully one day in Shelby County. Let's not hold up this process up any longer and get this school open. Families deserve better options.
1/24/2025 19:41:18	pguy2@southwest.tn.edu	Parish	Guy	901-605-8741	Shelby	Family Member	Novus SMART Academy is a great school option for families in Rutherford County. I support Dr. Sager and can't wait to see the great impact this school will have in the community. As someone who enjoys STEM education, I appreciate seeing inquiry-based learning and project-based learning in science and math. I students do not demonstrate enough curiosity and creativity outside of social media. I believe this school will open doors for students that they never imagined. The smaller classroom sizes will be great for students, especially those who have challenges with learning. I fully support Novus SMART Academy and look forward to its manifestation and growth over time.
1/24/2025 19:42:37	ahinton3000@gmail.com	Antonio	Hinton	901-707-0658	Shelby County	Colleague	I am writing to express my wholehearted support for this application, as well as for the dedicated efforts of the school design team, advisory board, and board of trustees. The vision the organization has for this charter school resonates deeply with me.

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1/24/2025 19:45:27	mccullough.destiny06@gmail.com	Destiny	McCullough	769-243-3002	N/A	Board Member Interest, Colleague	As a school leader and education consultant, I am pleased to support the launch of Novus SMART Academy in Rutherford County, led by Mr. Jeremy Sager. For nearly 20 years, my leadership and consultancy have focused on developing the whole child by providing equity, access, and disability inclusion to combat systems of oppression for a diverse community of learners to drive social change. As a former Tennessean, I celebrate Dr. Sager's efforts to create new opportunities and pathways for the families in Rutherford County. National data shows that the overall reading and math proficiencies in Rutherford County are below the average. Additionally, the rates of special education students and discipline are significantly disproportionate. Novus SMART Academy seeks to address opportunity gaps using whole-child and diversity, equity, and inclusion approaches to teaching and learning. Therefore, Novus SMART Academy is poised to address the challenges and inequities students and families have faced for generations. Through its curricula and nurturing the development of self for grades kindergarten through eighth, Novus SMART Academy is dedicated to connecting students' hearts, minds, and hands through critical thinking and problem-solving. This pathway reduces barriers to high school, college, and an independent life. As a current principal, I appreciate people who desire to change the trajectory of youth. Dr. Sager and I connected through our former school and district leadership and bonded over the desire for change in our community. I have unwavering faith that Dr. Jeremy Sager will lead Novus SMART Academy to uncharted territory by providing educational equity and excellence for the students and families in Rutherford County.
1/24/2025 19:48:22	dtross@strivecollegiate.org	Dominique	Tross	901-849-0821	Metro Nashville Resident	Community Partnership, Colleauge	As an educational colleague and current charter school leader, I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to be led by Dr. Jeremy Sager. During our time together at Power Center Academy High School (grades 9-12 in 38115), I had the opportunity to work under Dr. Sager where he demonstrated astonishing qualities of leadership, determination, consistency, and accountability. During his time as the Ninth Grade Academy Principal, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Sager offered virtual school experiences that allowed our students to thrive in uncharted territories, supporting all learning to ensure our students continued to demonstrate their love for learning, no matter the current circumstances. I currently serve as the Director of Continuous Improvement for STRIVE Collegiate Academy in the metro-Nashville community. As a part of the school leadership team, I have personally witnessed the positive impact that a well designed charter school can have on students' academic achievement, personal development, and on the surrounding community. As a launching pad for academic success, it is important that students have a strong rigorous educational foundation as a pipeline to nurture the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators. The establishment of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a valuable investment in the future of the Rutherford County community, fostering a passion for STEM and preparing students for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contribute significantly to addressing the growing demand for high-quality education within the La Vergne and Smyrna communities, expressed in its current need for more school options. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the potential to become a beacon of educational excellence, inspiring other institutions to adopt similar models. Again, I support Novus SMART Academy (K-8) as a high-quality option and hope that it will be granted to open in August 2026. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.
1/24/2025 19:49:58	ville03grad99@yahoo.com	Antoine	Weir	615-516-1312	Rutherford County Resident	Colleague	I am in favor of Novus SMART Academy for the Rutherford county area because it gives families another excellent option for education. Its educational standards and goals are in line with the state of Tennessee's education standards and goals. Highly trained, experienced leaders will lead the school.
1/24/2025 19:51:40	roddwilliams3027@gmail.com	Roderick	Williams	954-652-9868	Virginia	Colleague	I wholeheartedly support Novus Smart Academy. All children deserve a highly quality education and Novus Smart Academy will provide opportunities that will impact their future positively.
1/24/2025 19:52:55	sauna.springer@gmail.com	Sauna	Springer	615-512-2525	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend	Dr. Sager who has over a decade of experience in the field of education and is a tireless advocate for excellence in the field, should be given the chance to bring his expertise and knowledge to this community. His goal to lead children either to college or a career driven path, as well as a two teacher classroom in my humble opinion is a much needed model.
1/24/2025 19:54:36	courtneyj.hamilton@gmail.com	Courtney	Lewis	615-586-0317	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Colleague	I fully support the opening of Novus SMART Academy! With its innovative approach, including College & Career Pathways, an extended school year, and two-teacher classrooms, this school is set to provide our children with an exceptional education. The SMART model's emphasis on Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology, along with character education, will prepare students for future success. Dr. Jeremy Sager's proven leadership and commitment to every student's well-being make this school a valuable addition to our community. Let's bring Novus SMART Academy to life!

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1/24/2025 19:56:12	nzingagibbs@gmail.com	Nzinga	Harper	601-278-4886	Mississippi	Former Colleague	Jeremy Sager, the Founder of Novus SMART Academy has approached this noble quest of opening a place of learning for the community of Rutherford County with pure intentions, immense research and reflection, and unbelievable faith. Mr. Sager understands the need to provide every child in the community with a high quality education and I believe he can do that and more. With his 15 years of experience and unwavering commitment to educating all children, Novus SMART will be a beacon of light for families who believe they deserve better for their young scholars. With a focus on character education, college and career pathways, two teacher classrooms, and the SMART Model implementation will guarantee that students receive the well-rounded education they deserve. I encourage you to seriously consider this Academy for approval, for the sake of children and families in Rutherford County.
1/24/2025 19:58:22	charnishaphipps@gmail.com	Charnisha	Phipps	901-262-5943	Shelby	Colleague	I'm genuinely excited about Novus Smart Academy's innovative approach, including its college & career pathways, extended school year, and two-teacher classrooms. The focus on character education and the SMART model will greatly enrich the students of Rutherford County's learning experiences. Dr. Jeremy Sager's extensive background and commitment to education promise a nurturing environment where each student is known, loved, and respected. This initiative will have a profound positive impact on Rutherford County residents by providing high-quality education and preparing their students for successful futures.
1/24/2025 19:59:48	msmadkin@yahoo.com	Alainna	Stephens	870-329-0157	Metro Nashville Resident	Board Member Interest, Friend of Novus	Novus SMART has focused on various areas of importance. Its alignment to College & Career Pathways, Extended School Year,Two-Teacher Classrooms,Character Education Focus, SMART Model (Science, Math, Arts/Electives, and Research, emphasizes further the passion this program has for our future professionals.
1/24/2025 20:02:09	dalmoniqueb@ymail.com	Dalmonique	Burleson	615-509-1619	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend of Novus	I have had the privilege of knowing the founder of Novus now for several years. Dr. Sager is a compassionate, dedicated, and determined young man whose heart for people, young and seasoned, is the reason this school will be a magnificent addition to the Rutherford County School District. Having two children of my own to matriculate through a charter school program in Davidson County, I can attest to the pros of having a school enriched with such benefits as offering a college/career path, providing two-person classrooms, implementing an extended school year, and utilizing the SMART Model for students. This charter school is sure to give parents another option for their students in hopes of strengthening their future endeavors and contributions to society. We know the importance of a good educational foundation and Novus is definitely a great choice for the residents of Rutherford County. I look forward to the greatness that will be produced because of this new entity. Their great leader, Dr. Jeremy is already an example of what is to come.
1/24/2025 20:03:49	ashleylperry@outlook.com	Ashley	Perry	615-500-2421	Sumner County	Colleague	I support the opening of Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 20:05:06	lady.gladiator2016@gmail.com	Raven	Riggins	727-338-6011	Williamson	Colleague	I fully believe and entrust the Novus SMART Academy in all of their endeavors. I believe that they will make a difference in the community. This is the right direction for the education system.
1/24/2025 20:06:46	Celina_Merrill@yahoo.com	Celina	Merrill	804-588-8747	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend of Novus	I am for the school! I think it would be a good option for the community.
1/24/2025 20:08:35	prayandexercise@gmail.com	Glenn	Jamison	615-579-3239	Metro Nashville Resident	Fellow Colleague	I believe Novus Smart Academy will be a huge asset to the community they will be servicing. As an educator myself. I know the value of having teachers and administrators who truly are committed to the beautiful and necessary work they give themselves to. My good friend, Dr. Jeremy Sager is one of these people. He has served over 15 years in education in grades grades K-12 in West and Middle Tennessee. He is a Tennessee Rewards School Principal. He has a true servant's heart. He is loved and respected with the education profession and beyond.
1/24/2025 20:10:02	deyon.caldwell@yahoo.com	Deyon	Caldwell	202-258-7112	Texas	Friend of Novus	I support Novus SMART Academy and its Founder, Dr. Sager. This school will give students and families access to a quality education option to ensure students are ready for college and the workforce. Social media has made a negative impact on many students and they lack the social skills to communicate effectively. With Character Education at the helm of this school model, I believe Dr. Sager and his team will give student the skills they need to thrive with a balanced approach to learning and becoming leaders.

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1/24/2025 20:12:51	shercobia.gordon-hall@mnps.org	Shercobia	Hall-Gordon	615-625-8499	Giles County	Colleague	I am delighted to support Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy (K-8). I have worked with Dr. Sager at Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools in the Innovative Schools department as a district lead. I have always been impressed with his uncanny ability to get things done. Dr. Sager is attentive, methodical, and made a lasting impact in our department and with the schools that he serviced. His commitment to professionalism and productivity makes him a joy to work with. Dr. Sager has a very positive attitude and was a very supportive colleague. His interest in helping students, principals, and all stakeholders that he worked with allowed him to make meaningful and lasting connections. It is very clear that he is a critical thinker while being very attentive to details. He is very aware of nuance and extremely skilled in synthesizing information to make informed decisions that directly affects the interest of all participants. When I learned of his leaving from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, I was deeply saddened at our department's loss. However, Dr. Jeremy Sager's vision for founding Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is nothing short of amazing and will make an excellent additional school option to scholars and families in Rutherford County. Without hesitation I praise his abilities and performance in every aspect of his professional career. I believe his vision to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high- quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society speaks to his leadership capacity and love for students and their families. He's ready for the leadership role of Executive Director and can handle any task, large or small, presented to him. Please feel free to contact me by email (Shercobia.gordon hall@mnps.org) or cell phone (615-241-6904) if you have any questions."
1/24/2025 20:18:10	adrienne.alford@tn.gov	Adrienne	Alford	423-290-8036	Shelby	Colleague	I am writing in support of Novus SMART Academy (K -8) Charter School's application for charter authorization through the TN Public Charter Commission. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Dr. Jeremy Sager, Founder of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for the past five years. Due to the amount of time that I have been acquainted with Jeremy along with my educational background and experience as a charter school authorizer, I feel that I am in an excellent position to attest to his ability as an innovative and strong education leader. Dr. Sager is an analytical leader who has an exceptional ability to listen to diverse opinions and collaborate effectively and efficiently, with students' best interests in mind. He is a visionary, one who sees the big picture and can inspire others to work at the highest level of professionalism. He has been actively involved in school reform and understands how students learn and what it takes to ensure leaders and teachers are supporting students to reach their highest potential. I have always characterized him as a leader and an innovator. As a lifelong educator, he is a firm believer that great teachers must be in every classroom, great leaders must be in every building, and strong structures must be in place across districts and networks to ensure sustained success. Jeremy's work experience and training in the Build. Excel. Sustain. (BES) program prepared him for the work that is ahead for all stakeholders in the Rutherford County community. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure all scholars are successful through the delivery of high-quality academic instruction using extended time and blended learning specifically in literacy and math, with a strategic two teacher model. I've engaged in numerous conversations with Dr. Sager about the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and I believe that he is fully prepared to support this very important work at the highest level. The decision to approve charter school applicants is complex. At the core of the decision, there must be a demonstrated commitment and willingness to become immersed in a community and fully embrace all aspects from cultural dynamics to barriers. I am more than confident that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide exemplary learning opportunities for the families in Rutherford County. My belief and support of the mission and vision of Novus Academy stand firm, and I am committed to continuing my support of Dr. Sager's work by serving as a member of his advisory council. I support the approval of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Charter School's application, a decision that will provide a high quality choice option for Rutherford County families. With urgency and hope, I request that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is authorized to enact this important educational initiative. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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1/24/2025 20:23:56	heather.mcmillin@mnps.org	Heather	McMillin	408-515-9767	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	I am writing in support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), a new charter school planning to open in the fall of 2026 in Rutherford County, Tennessee. I have known Dr. Sager personally and professionally for a little over a year. Prior to his current role as the proposed CEO and Lead Founder at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), he served as my English/Language Arts (ELA) counterpart, leading the secondary literacy program for all our priority schools in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). We worked side-by-side to successfully support the turnaround work of MNPS priority schools, recently "graduating" three schools (2 middle, 1 high) in the last two years. Dr. Sager is also well versed in the world of Charter, having successfully served as a principal for Republic Schools in Nashville. He is passionate about ensuring ALL students have access, and the supports needed, to receive a high-quality education. His career has focused on supporting student success for historically marginalized populations. His position at MNPS was designed to support school leadership, literacy coaches and teachers in an effort to break the cycles of providing an inequitable and disproportionate education to students. Dr. Sager's journey as an educator is not a career, but rather a labor of love. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a unique opportunity for Rutherford County Schools to "close the gap" and to become a model school/district in Tennessee to provide all students with an equitable education so that they may become productive, well balanced, critical thinkers. Although Rutherford County exceeds Tennessee's averages in many ways, our State continues to underperform when compared to the national average. When considering the urban regions of Rutherford County, that dynamic (predictably) shifts. Although 49% proficient in math and 47% proficient in ELA exceeds TN norms, it is still far below the ideal of 80% or better. Dr. Sager has proven, both in his prior work and in MNPS, that he is a vision-driven and "boots on the ground" servant leader working to improve opportunities for our students. I am honored to support Dr. Sager and Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in becoming a model for schools in Tennessee and across the nation.
1/24/2025 20:27:25	twashington@edtec.com	Terrence	Washington	470-523-3317	Fulton County, Georgia	Back Office Support	I am writing in support of the Novus Smart Academy charter school petition that is under consideration for your approval. Based on EdTec Inc.'s considerable experience since 2001 in working with numerous charter school development teams and operating charter schools, we offer the following statements of support for consideration: EdTec has been working with Novus Smart Academy for several months and has developed a strong working relationship with the Novus Smart Academy development team. Our assessment of the team and the organization is that they are capable, conscientious, and dedicated to providing a rich instructional program to the students and communities to be served. When the Novus Smart Academy petition is approved, the school plans to contract with EdTec for its comprehensive charter school back-office support services. EdTec will provide its expertise, guidance and support in the successful launch and business operations of the school. EdTec has built an excellent reputation with charter schools and their authorizers throughout the nation for providing the highest quality business and operations support. EdTec is a social venture founded in 2001 to develop, support and advance quality charter schools. Our exceptional team has provided unparalleled expertise and support to over 250 charter schools and charter developers across a comprehensive range of services. EdTec provides business, educational support and school software solution services - exclusively to charter schools. EdTec's economies of scale deliver senior, experienced personnel specializing in various areas of school management, development of benchmarks and best practices. We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding our services and how we plan to support the Novus Smart Academy staff and board. Please let us know if EdTec can be of further assistance. We look forward to the potential of supporting the launch and operations of the school and to the potential of working with the Rutherford County community.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 20:30:16	jeffery.norfleet@shortercollege.edu	Jeffery	Norfleet	931-801-0218	Montgomery County	Community Partnership	In the current world we live in, there is a need for more rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction in schools. In my opinion, Novus SMART Academy will be the perfect addition to the Rutherford County Schools district, laying a strong foundation for learners at an early age. I expressed interest in serving as a founding member for Novus SMART Academy. As a higher education administrator and faculty member, the vision for Rutherford County through the high-quality work of Novus SMART Academy will provide high quality support for students as well as the community. My recent departure to fulfill a role in another state has changed my ability to provide the necessary physical support to Novus SMART Academy, however, I would be remiss not to provide this letter of support for Dr. Sager and the development of Novus SMART Academy. Lastly, without a doubt, I believe Novus SMART Academy will flourish in the Rutherford County Schools community. Students will be provided with an outstanding education that will prepare them for the real world and a postsecondary credential whether it is for the workforce or academics related. Novus SMART Academy will notably make a long-lasting and positive impact in Rutherford County as well as the world of education!
1/24/2025 20:32:52	erika.coleman@comcast.net	Erika	Coleman-Mitchell	615-887-5526	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am writing this letter to express my support for the opening of Novus SMART Academy, a proposed Kindergarten through 8th grade school for the families of Rutherford County, Tennessee. As a resident of Smyrna, I believe this school will play a crucial role in providing students with an exceptional educational experience that prepares them for high school, post secondary, and beyond. Since most students attending schools in LaVergne and Smyrna are performing below the statewide average in math and English Language Arts, I understand the need for our students to have a more rigorous educational program that combines high-quality curricula and instructional practices as well as a focus on personal growth, innovation, and creativity. The mission and vision outlined for Novus SMART Academy align with the values I have for educating our youth. Offering rigorous curricula will ensure that students are academically challenged and well-prepared for higher education and their future careers. Additionally, the emphasis on innovation and creativity is vital in preparing students to contribute meaningfully to society. The school's commitment to nurturing personal growth will ensure that students develop into well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of purpose and self awareness. Novus SMART Academy's approach to education will empower students to thrive on their chosen paths and contribute to the development of future leaders who will shape a better world. As a result, I wholeheartedly support the opening of Novus SMART Academy and believe that it will provide a high-quality option for the students and parents in Rutherford County. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.
1/24/2025 20:35:28	subira.gordon@nashvillecharter.org	Subira	Gordon	561-714-5391	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	I am writing to enthusiastically support the proposal of Novus SMART Academy. This K-8 school will provide the students and families in Rutherford County with a high-quality educational option. The careful thought and consideration in the academic model create an environment where teachers can reach various students with different learning styles. The three-pronged approach of asset-based, inquiry-based, and project-based learning with two teachers in the classroom, K-5, will ensure that our students start their academic journey on strong footing and are exposed to various learning opportunities. The Nashville Charter Collaborative is the lead advocate for public charter schools in Nashville. We provide valuable resources around student and family support for schools, elevate school leaders and their best practices, and support the navigation of the authorizing and accountability processes. After spending time with Jeremy Sager and learning more about his vision for the students of Rutherford County, I am excited by the mission and vision of this leader. Jeremy has a history of strong leadership but his deep passion for responsive teaching and ensuring that he creates an environment that fosters a love for learning is what sets him apart as someone that we are confident will improve not just the academic outcomes but the life outcomes of those students that attend Novus SMART Academy. I am confident that the addition of Novus SMART Academy will contribute positively to the education of the students in Rutherford County. With a research-based academic model, a thoughtful parent partnership program, and a true passion for embracing innovation and creativity in service for great life learning, this charter school proposal is particularly compelling and deeply needed within the community. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impact that Novus SMART will have in Rutherford County.

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1/24/2025 20:40:46	tbranch@valorcollegiate.org	Thomas	Branch	615-715-4381	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague and Mentor	I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its proposed CEO/Lead Founder, Jeremy Sager. I have had the privilege of knowing Jeremy for a few years now, and have witnessed firsthand his unwavering commitment to K-12 education, passion for student success, and exemplary leadership skills. I have been consistently impressed by Jeremy's integrity, work ethic, and dedication to improving educational outcomes for all students. Jeremy's academic background, including a Doctor of Education in Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning, and his extensive experience in education, make him a highly qualified and capable leader for Novus SMART Academy. Novus SMART Academy's mission and vision align seamlessly with the values and goals of the broader education community. The commitment to providing scholars with rigorous curricula, fostering a love for learning, and promoting personal growth reflects a dedication to excellence that is essential for student success. The innovative academic focus and plan outlined in the Novus SMART Academy Abstract demonstrate a thoughtful and strategic approach to addressing the unique needs of scholars in Rutherford County, Tennessee. The need for Novus SMART Academy is evident when considering the educational landscape in Rutherford County. While overall performance in math and English/Language Arts in the county is commendable, the data indicates a gap in achievement for scholars in La Vergne and Smyrna. Novus SMART Academy has identified this gap and is poised to provide a solution through high-quality academic instruction, extended learning time, and a strategic two-teacher model. Moreover, the proactive approach of Novus SMART Academy to partner with Rutherford County Schools and address the challenges presented by the countywide rezoning plan demonstrates a commitment to equity and inclusivity. By providing an additional school option, Novus SMART Academy aims to support scholars and families, ensuring that they have access to high-quality education without uprooting them from their current communities. Jeremy Sager's track record of success and accomplishments in education, including achieving TVAAS Level 5 Reward School Status and being recognized as a 2022 Public Charter School Changemaker, attests to his ability to lead Novus SMART Academy towards academic excellence and positive transformation. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Jeremy Sager as the proposed CEO/Lead Founder. Their commitment to providing exceptional educational opportunities aligns with the values we hold dear in the public school community. I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will play a pivotal role in enhancing the educational landscape in Rutherford County and making a lasting impact on the lives of scholars and families. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any additional information or support.

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1/24/2025 20:45:41	csales@learnatiprep.com	Calandra	Sales	256-804-8158	Alabama	BES Colleague and CSGF Cohort Members	I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the proposed Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Lead Founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager. As a founding member of the advisory board and someone deeply committed to quality education, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) holds tremendous potential to positively impact the educational landscape in Rutherford County. Being the Founder and Executive Director of Independence Preparatory Academy in Fairfield, AL, and witnessing the transformative power of charter schools, I am convinced that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide a unique and innovative educational experience for students in this community. The focus to prepare students with the skills needed to collaborate appropriately with their peers, to think critically and creatively across all content, and to solve real world challenges through Asset-based Learning (ABL) in Arts/Electives, and Character Education, Inquiry-based Learning (IBL) in Science and Research (i.e., Reading, Writing, and Social Studies), and Project-based Learning (PBL) in Science, Math and Technology aligns seamlessly with the needs and aspirations of the next generation student. One of the key strengths of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is its commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The emphasis on ensuring all students succeed through delivering high-quality academic instruction using extended time and blended learning, specifically in literacy and math, with a strategic two-teacher model, reflects a dedication to creating a school culture that encourages academic excellence, critical thinking, and personal growth. The comprehensive community engagement strategy also sets Novus SMART Academy (K-8) apart. The school will create a holistic learning experience beyond the traditional classroom setting by involving parents, local businesses, and community organizations. Dr. Jeremy Sager is an experienced and dedicated educator with success in leading schools in the Nashville area. Coupled with the visionary leadership of the governing board, I am confident that the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) team will ensure the school's successful establishment and sustained growth. As a charter school founder, I understand the challenges and rewards that come with such an endeavor, and I am enthusiastic about the positive impact this school will have on the lives of Rutherford County students. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the approval of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). This school has the potential to become a beacon of excellence in education and contribute significantly to its students' intellectual and personal development.
1/24/2025 20:47:39	insaneteacher@hotmail.com	Jennifer	Jones	615-618-8732	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend of Novus	I am writing to offer my support for Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy, which he is proposing to establish. Students in La Vergne, Smyrna, and the greater Rutherford County community deserve the best in teaching and learning. Dr. Sager and his development of Novus SMART Academy embodies the characteristics needed to provide an inclusive and equitable learning environment that will engage and challenge students to reach their full potential for career and college readiness. With the support of the community and partnership with Rutherford County Schools, I firmly believe that Novus SMART Academy will propel the growth of every student that enters its doors. Dr. Sager's experience as an administrator, instructional coach, teacher, and BES Fellow has built his capacity to design, found, and lead a high-quality school focused on implementing researched-based practices and strategies. Dr. Sager has a profound ability to build relationships that nurture and foster growth, inspire change, and encourage hard work. These skills will serve Rutherford County Schools and Novus SMART Academy well as he recruits students and builds community support overall. I urge you to authorize Novus SMART Academy as an additional school option for students in the Rutherford County Schools district.

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1/24/2025 20:50:18	ylewis@gestaltcs.org	Yetta	Lewis	901-626-4664	Metro Nashville Resident	Former CEO & Mentor	I am writing to support Novus SMART Academy charter school and its leader, Dr. Jeremy Sager. Through Dr. Sager's K-12 school experience, professional knowledge, and community engagement. I am sure his leadership and potential new school will make a difference in your county. I have known Dr. Sager professionally since 2016. He was hired as a Power Center Academy Middle School Dean of Instruction. As Dean, he was responsible for instructional coaching, curriculum implementation, and site-based school assessments. During his tenure, the school maintained a Level 5 TVAAS status and met their annual academic targets. Dr. Sager provided sound professional development and coaching programs for our teachers. Later, Dr. Sager was promoted to the position of school leader at our Ninth Grade Academy campus. The Ninth Grade Academy provides programming to increase high school student's success and preparation. Throughout Dr. Sager's tenure with Gestalt Community Schools, Dr. Sager provided both instructional and operational leadership. As an instructional leader, Dr. Sager developed and facilitated high-quality professional development that addressed our teachers' development and students' instructional needs. As an operational leader, he strategically and ethically managed resources, and assigned and scheduled staff roles and responsibilities that helped to optimize their capacity and address our scholars' learning needs. Dr. Sager balances instructional and operational leadership to set the foundation for an effective charter school in Rutherford County. Novus SMART Academy will provide an educational experience that will change the trajectory of their students' lives by providing authentic, real-world instruction within a Project-Based Learning environment.
1/24/2025 20:54:35	terry@newteacheru.org	Terry	Ross	901-603-6701	Shelby	Colleague & Mentor	I am writing to wholeheartedly endorse Dr. Jeremy Sager for the establishment of the Novus SMART Academy K-8 charter school in Rutherford County. Having known Dr. Sager since our time together in MCS/MSCS during Efficacy Trainings, in 2011, I have witnessed first-hand his unwavering dedication and competence in the field of education. Dr. Sager's impressive tenure as a District Instructional Literacy Coach and a PLC Coach at Treadwell Middle School laid a strong foundation for his leadership skills. His participation in the Emerging Leaders Program with New Leaders for New Schools is a testament to his commitment to continual professional growth. Moreover, his experience as a Curriculum & Instruction Team Writer and an English Teacher at Craigmont High School illustrates his deep understanding of academic content and effective teaching strategies. One of Dr. Sager's most commendable qualities is his ability to manage complex relationships and work effectively with diverse communities. This skill, coupled with his passion for urban public education and a long-term commitment to K-12 public education, makes him an ideal leader for Novus SMART Academy. Dr. Sager's previous role as School Principal at Nashville Prep with RePublic Charter Schools, where he achieved TVAAS Level 5 Reward School Status, showcases his exceptional capability in school leadership. His recognition as a 2022 Public Charter School Changemaker by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools further validates his expertise in transforming schools in academics, culture, and operations. The mission of Novus SMART Academy is both ambitious and necessary: providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction. This mission, coupled with an innovative academic plan that includes extended time and blended learning, a strategic two-teacher model, and a focus on Asset-based Learning, Inquiry-based Learning, and Project-based Learning, positions the academy as a beacon of educational excellence. Dr. Sager's track record in leadership, management, and his ability to foster an environment conducive to learning and personal growth is unparalleled. Under his guidance, I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will not only achieve but surpass its goals, ultimately benefiting the scholars of Rutherford County and the broader community. I urge the Commission to support the establishment of Novus SMART Academy K-8. Dr. Jeremy Sager is the ideal candidate to lead this innovative and much-needed educational initiative. Thank you for considering this endorsement.

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1/24/2025 20:57:28	nreed@highschoolsuccess.org	Nina	Reed	901-422-1998	Shelby	Colleague	I eagerly support Dr. Jeremy Sager as he works to design a scholar-centered academic program in Rutherford County, Tennessee. I was personally introduced to Dr. Sager during his role as Freshman Academy Principal at Power Center Academy High School in Memphis, Tennessee. As his Leadership Coach, my role included supporting Dr. Sager and his Leadership Team as they implemented research based work to support freshmen scholars. This work included developing systems that focus on data analysis and next-step planning to ensure that freshmen scholars receive the support needed to remain on track for on-time graduation and experience post-secondary success. I found Dr. Sager's abilities to be outstanding! At the start of our work together, Dr. Sager began with the most important part of leadership-relationship building. His teachers were eager to meet the established expectations because of the culture of collaboration he fostered. He also involved scholars in both the planning and implementation phases of systems development, and because of this, they were compelled to meet, and they exceeded, the social and academic goals that were collaboratively set., which included 100% of 9th graders be on track for on-time graduation at the end of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have no doubt that Novus Smart Academy will benefit scholars both socially and academically, providing them with authentic and applicable learning opportunities. Dr. Sager is an excellent planner, and his openness to feedback allows for a continuous improvement methodology that will make for a successful learning environment. I am eager to read of the success the scholars of Novus Smart Academy will experience, and I am willing to support Dr. Sager as he works diligently to bring this rewarding educational opportunity to the scholars and families of Rutherford County, Tennessee.
1/24/2025 21:02:21	lbooker@memphismeritacademy.org	Lakenna	Booker	901-604-2066	Shelby County	Advisory Council Member	I, Lakenna Booker, Founder and Head of School of Memphis Merit Academy Charter School, am writing to express my wholehearted support for the charter petition submitted by Novus SMART Academy, a kindergarten through 8th-grade charter school in Rutherford County, Tennessee. As the Founder and Head of School at Memphis Merit Academy Charter School, I have had the privilege of collaborating with the Lead Founder of Novus SMART Academy, Mr. Jeremy Sager. I am pleased to inform you that Memphis Merit Academy had the honor of hosting Mr. Sager during a fall residency, providing him with a firsthand experience of the work involved in founding and operating a high-performing charter school. Through our residency program, Mr. Sager had the opportunity to immerse himself in the mission of Memphis Merit Academy, which is centered around rigorous academics, high-quality instruction, and character development for scholars in kindergarten through 8th grade. As the Lead Founder of Memphis Merit Academy and a former BES Fellow, I understand the challenges and dedication required to successfully establish and operate a high-performing charter school in an underserved community. During Mr. Sager's residency, I provided guidance and support, sharing best practices in areas ranging from data analysis to daily operations. I have witnessed Mr. Sager's dynamic leadership and his commitment to the mission of creating a school aligned with the values and principles that make Memphis Merit Academy successful. I am proud to serve on the advisory council for Novus SMART Academy, further underscoring my belief in the school's mission and vision. Novus SMART Academy is designed to provide an extended school day and year, crucial elements in delivering a robust academic program. Much like Memphis Merit Academy, Novus SMART Academy recognizes the significance of extended time for foundational literacy development and the cultivation of essential skills in mathematics and reading. Moreover, Mr. Sager understands the importance of fostering a strong school culture that is both motivating and invigorating. The school model is structured to provide a supportive learning environment with high expectations for behavior, academics, homework performance, and character development. These elements are fundamental to the academic success of children Memphis, and I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will contribute significantly to the educational landscape of Rutherford County. The core beliefs of Novus SMART Academy, centered on the belief that all students can and will learn at high levels, align seamlessly with my own convictions. I firmly believe that all students possess the resilience and potential to excel on the path to college, and we need more schools like Novus SMART Academy in Tennessee's underserved communities to ensure equal opportunities for all students. In conclusion, I humbly request your support in authorizing Novus SMART Academy Charter School to provide a promising future for the families in Rutherford County. I am confident that the school, under Mr. Sager's leadership, will make a lasting and positive impact on the educational journey of its students.

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1/24/2025 21:05:49	gspickler@crosstownhigh.org	Ginger	Spickler	901-216-2162	Shelby	Colleague & Residency Host	It is my great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for the opening of Novus SMART Academy as a charter school serving students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade in Rutherford County under the leadership of Dr. Jeremy Sager. I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Sager when he did a short-term residency at our school, Crosstown High, in the fall of 2023. During his time with us, Dr. Sager spent a lot of time with our staff and students, both learning from the work we are doing, as well as sharing and getting feedback on his school plans. We were impressed with his vision for Novus and his commitment to providing a high-quality educational option for the students of his community. As a co-founder of a charter school myself, I understand the type of hard work and perseverance it will take to successfully launch and grow and based on my interactions with Dr. Sager, I believe that he has what it takes to open a school that will be an asset to the region and its students. Our team is particularly excited to see another school implementing inquiry-based and project-based learning in Tennessee. The school's commitment to equity centered support with culturally responsive strategies, as well as character development, is also something that we believe will add tremendously to the educational landscape of our state. Thank you for considering this recommendation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.
1/24/2025 21:07:45	paula.jones3@gmail.com	Paula	Jones	205-886-7748	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	It is my pleasure to support the establishment of Novus SMART Academy. Novus SMART Academy's goals that I believe are very important are to serve the traditionally underserved through college preparation. I grew up in Alabama. I was a very smart kid from what was considered a financially poor family. Therefore, this type of educational environment would have been ideal for a child like me and others who I knew showed great potential but did not have the specialized learning opportunities that Novus SMART Academy desires to provide this community. I have lived in Rutherford County since July 2012, and I have had the privilege of raising my son here. Rutherford County provides a great school system; however, I chose to allow my son to attend a private Christian school. For me, this private Christian school experience for my son with a rigorous curriculum was most attractive. In addition, I know that my son is being aggressively and intentionally prepared for college after high school. Schools like Novus SMART Academy will offer families like mine similar opportunities without tuition costs. With the middle Tennessee area growing so rapidly, in my opinion, there is room for exceptional and specialized school options like Novus SMART Academy. I wish Dr. Jeremy Sager and his team great success as they move through this process. If there is additional information required, please contact me at paula.jones3@gmail.com.
1/24/2025 21:10:56	bharvey@kdgi.solutions	Brandon	Harvey	901-568-1500	Rutherford County Resident	Advisory Council Member	It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the proposal for the Novus SMART Academy, being presented to TN Public Charter School Commission by Jeremy Sager. I am confident that you will find intriguing, Jeremy's passion for educational excellence, and his mission to partner with Rutherford County Schools to provide additional school options for our community's young scholars. As a business owner and resident in Rutherford County, I am fully invested in the growth of our community. I have two school aged children who attend our public school system, and I am proud of the strides that are being made to continuously improve their teaching environments. I hope that my journey in having obtained a graduate-level degree will have some bearing on the baseline and trajectory of our community's uprising scholars. The value that I place on education and Novus's well-manicured plan easily became drivers in me accepting the role as a non voting Advisory Board Member for Novus SMART Academy. Having an immediate understanding of trends in our exponentially growing community, such as the Rutherford County Schools rezoning plan, the Novus SMART Academy curricula will provide learning environments that are aligned with Rutherford County's goals of early intervention and high-quality academic instruction. The Novus SMART Academy will also be responsive in helping alleviate socio-economic inequities that arise with rapid growth such as being experienced in Rutherford County. I fully support the efforts of Novus SMART Academy to plant and grow an academic institution in our community. I hope that you will receive the proposal for Novus SMART Academy as beneficial and complimentary of the efforts that Rutherford County Schools are making.

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1/24/2025 21:14:03	takiue@gmail.com	Jeffrey	Takiue	615-934-6628	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	My name is Jeffrey Takiue, Director of Educator Leadership with Teach For America in Nashville and Chattanooga. I am a retired educator, spending 21 years in the Hawaii Public Schools as a teacher, academic officer, and principal. Two years ago, I moved to Smyrna with the hopes of providing my three children with better opportunities. After exploring our options, I chose to place my children at a small private school in Smyrna. Throughout my research, I was disappointed to see the academic outcomes of the various public schools in Smyrna. Jeremy Sager and I connected a year ago and he shared his vision for Novus SMART Academy. I was immediately impressed with the depth of his passion and his extensive preparation of starting a new public charter school. He was able to answer the many questions I had about the school's strategy, planning, growth, and leadership. Jeremy shared his background and the support system he has with the BES Fellowship. I believe he has the strengths, skills, and support to be an excellent school founder. In addition to Jeremy's talents, I was very impressed with his heart for the Smyrna and La Vergne community. Jeremy and I share the belief that schools have the ability to catalyze change for not only students, but for the entire community. Jeremy shared the strategies of how Novus is engaging families and community partners. His thoughtful and patient approach is a strategy I have seen build authentic and genuine relationships with all school stakeholders. In looking at the student outcome data for Smyrna and La Vergne schools, I am saddened by the results. I have no doubt that every educator in every classroom is trying their best to support students. However, when you have perpetually lower student outcomes, the root cause is often the larger systems within the school and the district. Over time, school systems develop an inertia that is difficult to break. Charter schools have proven to be an effective strategy to break that inertia in school districts. I believe that Novus SMART Academy, under Jeremy's leadership and vision, will attract and develop a staff that is able to have agile decision-making that is responsive to the needs of their students. I strongly support Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy for their charter approval.
1/24/2025 21:17:31	kathryn.abidali@mnps.org	Kathryn	Ali	615-727-3546	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	My name is Kathyrn Abid Ali and I am writing this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Dr. Jeremy Sager. I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Sager when he was a Lead Literacy Specialist for Metro Nashville Public Schools. Dr. Sager was an asset to our Literacy Department and demonstrated strong leadership skills. His communication skills and kindness are two of his attributes I remember the most. Part of his responsibilities as my Lead Literacy Specialist were to support me in my role as a school based Literacy Coach. Dr. Sager communicated our District expectations and initiatives clearly. He always made time for my questions and responded in a timely manner. He was also such an uplifting, positive, solutions-focused leader. His balance between strength and compassion will be very important in his role at Novus SMART Academy, which aligns to his vision to support scholars through Ases-based Learning in Character Education. I am confident that Dr. Sager will continue to be a great leader in the capacity of CEO/Lead Founder.
1/24/2025 21:19:51	andre.lee@the100.org	Andre	Lee	615-248-2721	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	The mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to inspire and unlock the full potential of young scholars through extraordinary learning experiences so they can be successful on their academic and professional journey directly aligns with our own mission. 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Inc. offers a program called 100 KINGS which offers academic enrichment, leadership development, and college and career readiness on Saturdays and over the Summer to underserved Black male youth, 5th-12th grade, located throughout Middle Tennessee. Since many of our students currently come from Rutherford County, it's comforting to know that we'll be able to continue building on a solid learning foundation established by schools such as Novus SMART Academy. As a nonprofit leader who has worked with students for over 25 years across the United States and abroad to help them achieve academic success and secure internships that led to full-time job opportunities, it is my honor to support other leaders like Jeremy Sager who are committed to helping our young people live a fulfilling, desired lifestyle. If you require additional information, please email me at andre.lee@the100.org.
1/24/2025 21:21:13	ron.alley@carpeartista.com	Ron	Alley	615-984-4040	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	This is to express excitement and support for the formation of Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus Smart Academy as a charter school in Rutherford County. We have entered into conversations with Dr. Sager regarding future partnerships between Novus Smart Academy and Carpe Artista Arts Academy. Novus Smart's stated mission of "career preparation" is very much in line with Carpe Artista's mission for creating career path training in entertainment and the arts. We look forward to further conversations with the leadership of Novus Smart regarding Carpe Artista Academy providing instruction in music, visual art, theater and production with them to their students.

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1/24/2025 21:24:11	candraclariette@gmail.com	Candra	Clariette	615-506-3493	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	This letter is to offer my full support to Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy Charter School, which has been proposed to be established in Rutherford County. Dr. Sager's astuteness to educate all students has been recognized throughout the State of Tennessee for yielding high student success rates and impeccable leadership as a documented school leader who led Nashville Prep to Reward School Status during the 2021-2022 school year. As a current education practitioner, I know that it is imperative to have high-quality school options that focus on the whole child. I believe Novus SMART Academy Charter School will provide the support students need academically, socially, and emotionally to thrive and reach their fullest potential. As the school-aged population of Rutherford County continues to grow, families should have a choice as to which school their children should attend. Dr. Sager is a well-accomplished educator that has numerous credentials and experience that will ensure that Novus SMART Academy will be a beacon of joy and educational achievement in the Rutherford County community. Therefore, I support Novus SMART Academy Charter School as an additional option for students and parents that deserve a high-quality education and I sincerely hope that this school will be approved as a charter school to begin operations during the 2026-2027 school year.
1/24/2025 21:29:47	csmith@bes.org	Chaundria	Smith	757-737-3459	Cuyahoga County, Ohio	Community Partnership, BES Coach and Leadership Mentor	This outlines my full support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager. Jeremy was a 2023-2024 Fellow with Build. Excel. Sustain., a highly selective, nationally recognized non-profit that trains high-capacity leaders to design, found, lead, and sustain high-performing charter schools. I have worked closely with Dr. Sager through the Fellowship and observed his commitment to building a school with the community, his desire to lead with excellence, and the knowledge, skills, and experience he brings to this work. Jeremy is a truly committed leader with expertise in illiteracy education, post secondary pathways, assessments, research, school operations, professional development, school leadership, and instructional coaching. Jeremy has spent over a decade in education as a literacy and PLC coach, resident leader, dean, and principal. His experience spans a variety of schools and educational settings with a high emphasis on excellent school leadership and demonstrating measurable and improved academic outcomes for students. Jeremy's vision for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is to inspire all scholars to unlock their full potential through extraordinary learning experiences that lead to successful college journeys and fulfilling careers, empowering them to positively impact society and achieve remarkable success in all aspects of life. To accomplish this, Jeremy has collaborated with many local organizations and stakeholders to design a school that responds to the community's needs. Additionally, the school and the founding team's vision taps into the collective talents and strengths of the students they intend to serve. Likewise, Jeremy's experience in instructional coaching laid a foundation for a clear and coherent vision for a rigorous instructional approach and a school design. He has designed his proposed school to include social-emotional learning options that create an environment that affirms the voices of all students and builds them into exceptional scholars. Working closely with Jeremy during this process has been a true privilege. His leadership and the intentionality behind his school model will ensure that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a high achieving school that meets the needs of Rutherford County's scholars and families and is an asset to the region. I fully support the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its lead founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager.
1/24/2025 21:30:50	kbeastmartin@gmail.com	Kennedy	Martin	615-995-2331	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend of Novus	I would like to announce my support for the Novus Smart academy. The biggest reason being 2 teacher classrooms. It allows no student to fall under the radar and easier to monitor attentiveness. The extended school year and smart model will also reinforce the ideology that kids will be prioritized and educated and thrive in this environment.
1/24/2025 21:31:59	Jessicahankins27@gmail.com	Jessica	Hankins	914-562-1558	Gwinnett	Friend of Novus	I support Novus Smart Academy because I truly believe children need options and support that provide what is best for an individual and their specific needs.
1/24/2025 21:33:20	benjamincrosby@gmail.com	Benjamin	Crosby	307-763-6460	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend of Novus	I'm writing in support of Novus SMART Academy. All children deserve educational options that work for them, and Novus offers parents the choice of a high-quality, rigorous and student-focused education for their children.
1/24/2025 21:34:20	radiantjoy2015@gmail.com	Brenda	Jones	770-530-0856	Georgia	Colleague	Equity in education is a phrase often used to describe our public schools, but is more challenging to implement from policy making all the way to daily interactions within the walls of the classroom. The work represented by Novus Smart Academy is an intentional effort from all levels to make strides to ensure equity for all students a daily reality.
1/24/2025 21:35:24	nautrie@empact.work	Nautrie	Jones	404-372-2365	N/A	Friend of Novus	Glad I can support! I also believe deeply that all children deserve education options that work for them!
1/24/2025 21:36:31	bmstraughter@gmail.com	Benjamin	Straughter	503-860-6998	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Yes to Novus!

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 21:37:36	mrsdcm1@gmail.com	Denise	Childs-Morgan	267-251-2425	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague	The Novus SMART Academy public charter school will be an asset to the community and the young minds it will cultivate. I strongly recommend The Novus SMART Academy be approved it will be a life changer and we need Novus SMART education.
1/24/2025 21:39:02	Nashvilleseafood@gmail.com	Darren	Morgan	215-908-2862	Metro Nashville Resident	Friend on Novus	The Novus SMART Academy public charter school will be an asset to the community and the young minds it will cultivate. I strongly recommend The Novus SMART Academy be approved it will be a life changer and we need Novus SMART education.
1/24/2025 21:41:01	josh@fulmerhomes.com	Josh	Fulmer	615-330-5507	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member., Real Estate Advisor to the Novus Board	I am a parent of three children in the RCS district. I want more choices when it comes to where I can send my child to school. Not all kids fit in the same box when it comes to education, so give parents options.
1/24/2025 21:42:14	sgordon928@gmail.com	Sienna	Gordon	615-497-0081	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I think Novus Smart Academy and the academic enhancement components it plans to bring to the community deserve an opportunity to support the Rutherford County education system.
1/24/2025 21:43:26	thebradshaws00@gmail.com	Brian	Bradshaw	901-618-9374	Williamson	Board Member	Novus SMART Academy is an investment in the future of our children and our community. This school is here to come alongside of Rutherford County, not replace them or compete. I believe that this is a school that has a model of sustainability and longevity that will make a positive impact for scholars and families.
1/24/2025 21:44:52	tanesha.t.m@gmail.com	Tanesha	Bradshaw	901-262-5693	Williamson	Spouse of Board Member	I believe that Novus SMART Academy will offer a unique curriculum that supports the success of students giving them a robust learning experience, focused on high-quality instruction and character education, that will allow them to excel not only in the classroom, but outside of the classroom.
1/24/2025 21:45:51	robertson.otis@gmail.com	Otis	Robertson	615-498-5736	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	This charter school will provide parents with more choices for their children's education.
1/24/2025 21:46:37	andrew.golden14@gmail.com	Andrew	Golden	615-293-4460	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe the class sizes with 1 teacher to 12 students at Novus will allow for more personalized attention for each student.
1/24/2025 21:47:36	blorenj7@gmail.com	Bertha	Jackson	228-380-1970	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	The innovative teaching methods and curriculum focused on asset-based learning, inquiry-based learning, and project-based learning at Novus SMART Academy will better prepare our students for the future.
1/24/2025 21:49:19	pmckinney@gmail.com	Price	McKinney	615-715-7060	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Novus' focus on innovation will help our kids succeed in a technology-driven world.
1/24/2025 21:50:10	smckinney@mtzionnashville.org	Sharon	McKinney	615-394-2753	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am confident that this school will bring a fresh approach to education through innovation and creativity that will inspire students to achieve and position them up for success in our community.
1/24/2025 21:51:21	rkirkwood4@gmail.com	Robert	Kirkwood	901-258-2047	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	After much research and learning more about Mr. Sager's vision, this charter school will be able to adapt quickly to the needs of their students in Rutherford County with a focus on high-quality instruction and character education.
1/24/2025 21:52:29	cherylkirkwood@att.net	Cheryl	Kirkwood	901-496-7728	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	My interest was particularly peaked with their approach of project-based learning that will nurture the students' skills in working with others and enhancing their cognitive skills.
1/24/2025 21:53:20	cparrish@mtzionnashville.org	Catina	Clark	615-500-0366	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I think having a school like Novus in our community will not only benefit the community and students, but also show a great partnership between Novus and Rutherford County to enhance our educational system.
1/24/2025 21:54:13	willard.clark@hcahealthcare.com	Willard	Clark	615-429-7402	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	The two-teacher model is not seen often in the classrooms. By implementing this model, I believe that all students will be given the attention they need to succeed in school and in life.
1/24/2025 21:55:11	tbarnes8014@gmail.com	Tony	Barnes	615-821-9635	Montgomery	Board Member Interest, Colleague of Board Member	The diverse learning models Novus charter school will help develop well-rounded students for college, careers and the future.
1/24/2025 21:56:13	lee26barnes@gmail.com	Leenay	Barnes	615-821-9632	Montgomery	Colleague of Board Member	The Rutherford County community will benefit from the educational innovation through Technology that Novus will bring students. Hopefully this school will establish a location in Clarksville as it continues to grow in middle Tennessee.
1/24/2025 22:06:00	mrcox@comcast.net	Micheal	Cox	615-730-3033	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I believe that this school will offer tailored educational experiences in the two-teach classroom, meeting the unique needs of each child.
1/24/2025 22:06:59	audra.cox@comcast.net	Audra	Cox	615-573-3955	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	The new charter school has a strong emphasis on challenging the student and instilling healthy discipline through character education, which is vital for where the world is going.
1/24/2025 22:08:17	nfantcra@gmail.com	Nikki	Fant	662-542-8377	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Novus will provide a nurturing environment for our children to learn, grow and thrive in their education for their future in college, career and life.
1/24/2025 22:09:14	servantalpha7@gmail.com	Jeff	Brown	901-485-6594	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	Novus' IBL approach will greatly benefit the students to be more curious and creative in the classroom. There is much research that shows that IBL has proven to be effective in the development of students.
1/24/2025 22:10:19	dgilchristbounds@gmail.com	Danny	Bounds	901-496-3464	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	Mr. Sager's experience in Education has equipped him to lead Novus Smart Academy. His vision for not only the children and the community, but also for teachers and school leaders, will lead to positive change and provide students with real-world learning opportunities in a nurturing environment.
1/24/2025 22:11:11	msepfreeman@gmail.com	Edwina	Freeman	313-623-8384	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	With a focus on academic excellence, Novus will set a high standard for education community and equip students to be self-disciplined through character education, which will prepare them for the future.
1/24/2025 22:12:05	tatum_mb@icloud.com	Tatum	Bradshaw	615-578-8477	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	The two-teacher model will allow teachers more freedom and flexibility to not only focus on curriculum and give more attention to each child, but it will also create space for more creativity and focus on teaching material in a differentiated way.
1/24/2025 22:12:54	jylafayette90@gmail.com	Jasmine	Lafayette	662-820-3100	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	The sense of community fostered by the Novus Smart Academy through character education will positively impact students, parents and the community.
1/24/2025 22:13:51	jeremylangfordsr@gmail.com	Jeremy	Langford	423-364-5026	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I think the desire to have Novus Smart Academy gives families an option that might better fit their child's learning style in a smaller classroom environment.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 22:14:41	cowancrew@comcast.net	Floyd	Cowan	615-390-4395	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	Novus Smart Academy's commitment to sustainability and the three learning methods are robust and forward-thinking. Having these three learning approaches positions the school and the children to excel in college, career and life.
1/24/2025 22:15:46	cowancrew@comcast.net	Princess	Cowan	615-948-1851	Metro Nashville Resident	Colleague of Board Member	Novus Smart Academy will be a place where students can thrive both academically and socially. Both academia and social skills go hand in hand in a student's success and when there is a focus not only on education, but also building community within, it boosts the confidence of a child and aids in their learning overall.
1/24/2025 22:17:51	livelife6547@yahoo.com	Tiffany	Dyson	901-361-5600	Shelby	Colleague of Dr. Sager	I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Sager at Power Center Academy Middle School in Memphis, Tennessee before he moved to the Nashville area to pursue other career opportunities. During that time, Dr. Sager demonstrated good character and integrity with our staff as the Dean of Instruction, and he loved our scholars and families so much. He worked hard and was willing to do the work with the staff. He also took time to mentor our young male scholars who had challenges in the classroom because of personal challenges outside of the classroom. He has quite the sense of humor and he always finds the positive in every situation. Through his process of opening Novus SMART Academy, I have had several conversations with Dr. Sager about this school and how he wants to serve his community. I really like that every classroom will have two teachers to support learning in small groups, and the focus on character education through SEL. I am truly inspired, but not surprised, by Dr. Sager's mission to open a school that will support all children, especially in underserved communities. If anybody believes that all children can achieve and commit to make it happen, Dr. Sager is the man! I've seen him do this with with my own eyes, like when he ensured that 100% of the 9th grade scholars at the high school were on track for on-time graduation in the middle of the pandemic, and they demonstrated TVAAS Level 5 growth in English I. He is unstoppable in a way that does not make excuses for what children can do! When Novus SMART Academy opens, it will definitely be a great environment for families and I am sure this school will become a staple in the Rutherford County community. Who knows; maybe one day Dr. Sager will open a location in Shelby County and I would love to be a part of that process. Thank you for time and let's get this school open.
1/24/2025 22:32:30	asenath.johnson@outlook.com	Asenath	Johnson	615-335-4085	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member.	As a community member; a leader of a nonprofit service organization; and church ministry committed to the success and development of our children, I would like to express my strong support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy. This school will provide vital educational opportunities that focus on preparing students for college and career pathways, setting them on a trajectory for lifelong success. One of the standout features of Novus SMART Academy is its commitment to personalized learning with its small classroom model, where each teacher will work with just 12 students. This approach ensures that every student receives individualized attention, fostering an environment where they can thrive academically and personally. The extended school year also allows for deeper learning and retention, ensuring that students stay on track and receive the extra support they may need. In addition to academic rigor, Novus SMART Academy prioritizes character education, teaching values such as respect, responsibility, and kindness. This balanced approach of academics and character-building is essential for developing well-rounded young people who are prepared to become engaged citizens. The SMART Module program-focused on science, the arts, and research, with a strong emphasis on technology-will equip students with the skills and knowledge they need in today's rapidly evolving world. By fostering creativity, critical thinking, and technological proficiency, Novus SMART Academy is creating future leaders in a variety of fields. I also appreciate the proposed location at 102 Ridley St., Smyrna. This will make the school accessible to many families in the area, providing an excellent educational option for those seeking a more personalized and forward-thinking approach to learning. I wholeheartedly support this initiative and encourage others in our community to do the same. Thank you to the Novus SMART Academy team for their vision and commitment to our children's future.
1/24/2025 22:36:57	apostlekaj1@gmail.com	Kevin	Johnson	615-916-9479	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	We need more of these kinds of academic institutions.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 22:40:47	hopeoliver@rutherfordcountytn.gov	Hope	Oliver	615-668-6967	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member., Local Elected Official	As a County Commissioner and a public school graduate, I absolutely advocate for public education. Rutherford County has one of the best public school systems in the state of Tennessee and in the United States. However, in our current Legislative climate, charter schools are now in Rutherford County. As a staunch advocate for public education, I also believe in the power of diversity in schooling options that serve our communities' needs. Charter schools, when effectively designed and operated, could offer an innovative approach to achieving educational excellence within the public school framework. They can provide parents and students with additional choices that cater to different learning styles, cultures, interests, and emotional needs, which is essential as Rutherford County becomes increasingly more diverse. I have had the opportunity to view Novus SMART Academy's curriculum and find it to be robust, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive. As you review the Novus SMART Academy's application, do so under conditions that ensure transparency, accountability, and an equitable review. Like Springs Empower Academy, which you have approved, Novus SMART Academy aims to complement, not compete with, Rutherford County public schools by working collaboratively with you to share best practices within our community.
1/24/2025 22:41:48	brittanyrussellrpsgt@gmail.com	Brittany	Russell	423-504-3049	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am pro education and I believe all learning opportunities are vital and beneficial to our community.
1/24/2025 22:42:48	Brelinda32@aol.com	Brelinda	Johnson	931-801-9863	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I am supporter of the Novus SMART Academy K-8 charter school. As an employee of Motlow and a resident of Murfreesboro, adding a charter school will give the county a more educational options to prepare our students for higher education and life.
1/24/2025 22:44:11	vwalker@gmail.com	Vera	Walker	423-596-2862	Chattanooga	Church Member	I think Novus will be a great addition to the Smyrna area.
1/24/2025 22:49:09	zoerendav211@gmail.com	Zoe	Davis	615-587-7131	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	This would be a great school!!
1/24/2025 22:50:54	ereynolds@mscc.edu	Eric	Reynolds	931-625-4723	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As the director of mechatronics for Motlow State, I support the opening of the Novus SMART Academy in Smyrna. Motlow partners with area schools to offer dual enrollment classes, and I would welcome the opportunity to support the Novus SMART Academy as well. Students thrive in varying environments depending on their personality and aptitude, and I am confident the Novus SMART Academy will offer a quality educational option that will be a good fit for some students.
1/24/2025 22:52:20	themeagan_mt@yahoo.com	Meagan	McManus	615-519-4988	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I support this new effort.
1/24/2025 22:53:41	mylikia@gmail.com	Mylikia	Franklin	615-738-6491	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	I support Novus SMART Academy.
1/24/2025 22:57:39	info@thekaycehoward.com	info@thekaycehoward.com	Kayce	Howard	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	My name is Kayce Howard, a proud resident of Rutherford County and the Facilities Operations Manager at Living Truth Christian Center, where Novus SMART Academy will open and operate in August 2026. I'm incredibly honored and excited to stand before you today as the Facilities Operations Manager and Philanthropist, but more personally, as a new mom. My daughter has completely transformed the way I see the world, especially when it comes to education. I want the absolute best for her, and I know that sentiment resonates with every parent and grandparent here today. The opportunity to partner with Novus SMART Academy in offering our facilities for their innovative programs fills me with a deep sense of joy and purpose. I now understand, more deeply than ever, the importance of high-quality school options for all families. As a child, my parents made the decision to send my siblings and I to private school & I particularly was homeschooled because the public schools in our zone didn't offer the consistency or equity that all students deserve. While I'm eternally grateful that my family had the financial resources to make that choice, I'm also acutely aware that many families in Rutherford County, especially those in underserved communities, don't have that same privilege. They feel trapped, with no access to better educational options that could secure their children's future. This is why I'm so passionate about our partnership with Novus SMART Academy. Dr. Sager and his team are building something extraordinary-a place where every child is seen, valued, and given the tools to succeed, regardless of background or circumstance. Novus SMART Academy has the potential to become a beacon of hope, a place where both students and families feel a genuine sense of belonging and empowerment. Today, we have the chance to provide families with an option that might have otherwise been out of reach. I am deeply honored to be part of this mission, and I wholeheartedly believe we are going to create something transformative for our community. I urge you, commission members, to vote in favor of opening this school. Let's make this dream a reality for Rutherford County!
1/24/2025 22:59:10	SharpT@rcschools.net	Tammy	Sharp	615-835-4687	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member., RCS Board Member	I fully support Novus SMART Academy's opening in Zone 1. The students are still coming and we need seats, especially on the north end.

Timestamp	Email Address	First Name	Last Name	Phone Number	Resident Status	How would you like to support?	Why do wish to support Novus SMART Academy?
1/24/2025 23:01:23	camillenicolew@gmail.com	Camille	Westmoreland	615-684-3701	Rutherford County Resident	I support as a community member.	As a dedicated advocate for education and the growth of our community, I wholeheartedly support the establishment of Novus Smart Academy in Rutherford County. This institution is positioned to become a beacon of innovation in education, offering students a unique, technology-forward curriculum that will prepare them for the ever-evolving demands of the 21st-century workforce. In a time where global competitiveness is driven by advancements in technology, coding, and critical thinking skills, Novus Smart Academy stands out for its commitment to equipping students with the tools they need to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Its focus on personalized learning, interdisciplinary approaches, and real-world application ensures that each student receives not only a strong academic foundation but also the problem-solving skills required for success. Rutherford County is growing rapidly, and with it, the need for diverse and forward-thinking educational institutions. Novus Smart Academy promises to fill this gap by offering an environment that encourages curiosity, creativity, and leadership in a way that traditional educational models have struggled to achieve. I believe that Novus Smart Academy will not only elevate the academic potential of its students but also contribute positively to the broader community. It's a step forward in ensuring that all children, regardless of background, have access to a top-tier education that prepares them for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.
1/24/2025 23:09:50	josh@fulmerhomes.com	Josh	Fulmer	615-330-5507	Rutherford County Resident	Community Partnership, I support as a community member., Real Estate Advisor to the Board	I am a proponent of school choice. Not all students fit in a box when it comes to the education process. The more options or choices we have as a parent gives our children the best opportunity to find the right fit for them so they can flourish. The bad press that is being put out about the other charter schools is full of misinformation and keyboard warrior smears. RCS isn't accounting for the future growth of Smyrna with the expansion of the city's sewer system. It is going to exacerbate the growth in the Stewarts Creek, Rocky Fork zones as well as zones north and east of Smyrna. While RCS is trying to get a handle on the situation they won't be able to because the growth will happen faster than they can move to build new schools. The only chance they have in my opinion is by allowing more charters to find and or build the relief valves as only the private sector can. I am a Realtor and yes I helped RCP and ACAR find the dirt and building that both campuses are operating on. I see the problem in a different light from a different perspective. My kids are at Stewarts Creek and the school is over capacity. The number I was told from a school board member is it is operating at 130% of capacity. If you purchase a home in the Stewarts Creek zone and your kids aren't already enrolled there then your kids can't go to the school and your kids are bused to Stewartsboro. What is that costing the district in additional transportation costs? Also is the district really referring to portables with no running water in them as part of the capacity for a school? Some municipalities will only allow portables to be in use for two years as a code before they have to be removed and yet RCS feels like that is a viable permanent solution.

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Combinator

Z Combinator Fellowship Gift Agreement

Congratulations on your successful completion of the Z Combinator 2024-25 Fellowship and on putting together a strong fundraising pitch! In recognition of your efforts and to support the opening of your school, an anonymous donor has generously pledged a $15,000 gift to your school, conditioned on the following agreements by you:

- Fulfill your Z Combinator Fellowship commitment by completing and sending all outstanding Z Combinator deliverables by February 14th, 2024
- Attend 3 virtual cohort follow-up sessions with the Z Combinator team to share your recent wins and challenges: Pre-Launch (~June 2024), Post-Launch (~September 2024), and Mid-Year (~March 2025)
- Share your progress, wins, and challenges with the Z Combinator team through a short survey ahead of each virtual session as well as your end of year 1 outcomes
- Participate in Z Combinator feedback requests via survey, focus group, or conversation
- Secure funding from Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF), New Schools Venture Fund (NSVF), and/or another significant donor, if you have not already done so
- Use 100% of the funding to support your school launch, as outlined in your pitch on January 16, 2025 and no later than September 2026

Please sign below to accept the above agreements and to accept the conditional gift of $15,000 to your school. Your school will receive your gift on or around the month following the first day of your school year, provided your school has achieved tax-exempt status by this date.

Congratulations again!

Jeremy Sager

Z Combinator Fellow
First & Last Printed Name

DocuSigned by:
Jeremy Sager
D2FD109D5F5343F...

Z Combinator Fellow
Signature

1/23/2025

Date

January 12, 2025

Charter Application Review Committee
Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro TN, 37128

RE: Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

I am writing in support of Novus SMART Academy (K -8) Charter School's application for charter authorization through Rutherford County Schools. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Dr. Jeremy Sager, Founder of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for the past five years. Due to the amount of time that I have been acquainted with Jeremy along with my educational background and experience as a charter school authorizer, I feel that I am in an excellent position to attest to his ability as an innovative and strong education leader.

Dr. Sager is an analytical leader who has an exceptional ability to listen to diverse opinions and collaborate effectively and efficiently, with students' best interests in mind. He is a visionary, one who sees the big picture and can inspire others to work at the highest level of professionalism. He has been actively involved in school reform and understands how students learn and what it takes to ensure leaders and teachers are supporting students to reach their highest potential. I have always characterized him as a leader and an innovator. As a lifelong educator, he is a firm believer that great teachers must be in every classroom, great leaders must be in every building, and strong structures must be in place across districts and networks to ensure sustained success.

Jeremy's work experience and training in the Build. Excel. Sustain. (BES) program prepared him for the work that is ahead for all stakeholders in the Rutherford County community. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will ensure all scholars are successful through the delivery of high-quality academic instruction using extended time and blended learning specifically in literacy and math, with a strategic two-teacher model. I've engaged in numerous conversations with Dr. Sager about the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and I believe that he is fully prepared to support this very important work at the highest level.

The decision to approve charter school applicants is complex. At the core of the decision, there must be a demonstrated commitment and willingness to become immersed in a community and fully embrace all aspects from cultural dynamics to barriers. I am more than confident that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide exemplary learning opportunities for the families in Rutherford County. My belief and support of the mission and vision of Novus Academy stand firm, and I am committed to continuing my support of Dr. Sager's work by serving as a member of his advisory council. I support the approval of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Charter School's application, a decision that will provide a high-quality choice option for Rutherford County families.

With urgency and hope, I request that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is authorized to enact this important educational initiative. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Alford

Adrienne Alford
Associate Superintendent of Authorizing and Accountability
Achievement School District
Adrienne.Alford@tn.gov

January 31, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy within the Rutherford County Community. As an educator at Valor College Prep in Nashville, Tennessee, I recognize the importance of providing accessible and high-quality education to our community's children. The prospect of a new charter school committed to excellence and inclusivity is truly exciting.

In being a part of a charter school community, I understand the importance of developing a cornerstone of our community, offering a nurturing and stimulating environment for students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

The founders and organizers behind Novus SMART Academy have demonstrated a clear commitment to educational excellence, innovation, and community engagement. Their vision for a school that prioritizes being student-centered, including modern teaching methodologies such as Asset Based Learning in Arts/Electives and Character Education, and fosters a sense of community involvement is commendable.

I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will not only meet but exceed the expectations of parents, students, and the community at large.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to advancing education within our community. I look forward to witnessing the success of Novus SMART Academy and the positive influence it will undoubtedly have on the lives of the students it serves.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amber Conway
Manager of Inspired, Purposeful Lives/Postsecondary Success Counselor
Valor College Prep
aconway@valorcollegiate.org

100
BLACK MEN
OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE, INC.

Real Men Giving Real Time®
Established 1991

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LEE MOLETTE
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Executive Director

The 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Inc. has distributed $1,026,500 in college scholarships since 2003.

Website:
www.the100middletn.org
Email: info@the100.org
Address: 105 Continental Place,
Suite #160
Nashville, TN 37027
(615) 248-2721

January 11, 2025

Re: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has our support!

To the Authorizer Review Committee, Rutherford County Schools:

On behalf of the 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Inc., I am writing this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to be led by Jeremy Sager. The mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to inspire and unlock the full potential of young scholars through extraordinary learning experiences so they can be successful on their academic and professional journey directly aligns with our own mission. 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Inc. offers a program called 100 KINGS which offers academic enrichment, leadership development, and college and career readiness on Saturdays and over the Summer to underserved Black male youth, 5th-12th grade, located throughout Middle Tennessee. Since many of our students currently come from Rutherford County, it's comforting to know that we'll be able to continue building on a solid learning foundation established by schools such as Novus SMART Academy.

As a nonprofit leader who has worked with students for over 25 years across the United States and abroad to help them achieve academic success and secure internships that led to full-time job opportunities, it is my honor to support other leaders like Jeremy Sager who are committed to helping our young people live a fulfilling, desired lifestyle.

If you require additional information, please email me at andre.lee@the100.org. Thank you so much for your strong consideration of Novus SMART Academy.

Sincerely,

Andre C. Lee
Executive Director

LIVING TRUTH
CHRISTIAN CENTER
Partners for Life

Apostle Amos L. Howard, Sr.

Corporate Headquarters
102 Ridley Street
Smyrna, TN 37167
Phone (615) 459-9017
Fax (615) 459-8670
www.livingtruthcc.org

From: Apostle Amos Howard, Senior
Living Truth Christian Center
102 Ridley Street
Smyrna, Tennessee 37167

To: Rutherford County Schools
Charter Schools Authorizer Review Committee
2240 Southpark Blvd
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

January 25, 2025

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I am Apostle Amos Howard, Senior, Pastor of Living Truth Christian Center. Living Truth Christian Center is a mission-driven church with two locations: one in Smyrna, Tennessee and one in Gadsden, Alabama. We believe that, "We are living proof, because we are Living Truth. The Word of God is our authority in making excellent choices for everyday living."

Our operations team began conversations with Dr. Jeremy Sager about the possibilities of using our facilities to open Novus SMART Academy (K-8) on our Smyrna campus. Shortly after the team's interaction, I met with Dr. Sager to hear more about the mission of the school, its model and design, and how the school will impact underserved communities of color in La Vergne and Smyrna. I was captivated by the level of passion and intentionality Dr. Sager demonstrated throughout his presentation, and we are excited that he sees Living Truth Christian Center as a partner to support our community through education.

My passionate concern for our Smyrna community led to the opening of Blessed Beginnings Comprehensive Learning Center, the first African American Church daycare in Rutherford County, Tennessee. We also established ALERT Community Development Corporation as a 501©3 to change lives through education, redevelopment, and training. Over the last seventeen years, we spearheaded the Back-to-School Bash Family Fun Fest, donating over 9,700 backpacks filled with school supplies and hygiene products to children in our surrounding community. Through our Lazarus House program, we were able to purchase transitional homes to provide housing for families, and we assist low-to-moderate income families in acquiring home ownership. Living Truth Christian Center has invested over $1 million in assisting families in transitioning or purchasing their first home.

Dr. Ashley Perry
233 Ettington Dr.
Gallatin, TN 37066

January 29, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my enthusiastic support for Novus SMART Academy and its mission to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction. The dedication to fostering a love for learning, embracing innovation and creativity, and encouraging personal growth truly sets Novus SMART Academy apart.

The commitment to academic excellence is evident in the mission statement, and it resonates with me as an educator and advocate of the local community. I believe that a strong foundation in education is crucial for the development of our children, and Novus SMART Academy seems poised to deliver on that front.

The emphasis on preparing scholars to thrive in their chosen college and career paths is commendable. In today's rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt, innovate, and pursue personal growth is essential. I am confident that Novus SMART Academy's approach will equip students not only with academic knowledge but also with the skills and mindset needed for success in the future.

Furthermore, the goal of making a positive impact on society reflects a broader vision that goes beyond individual success. Novus SMART Academy's focus on community and societal contribution aligns with my values, and I believe it will instill a sense of responsibility and civic engagement in the students.

As an educator with over ten years of experience in the public-school sector, I wholeheartedly support the establishment and success of Novus SMART Academy. I am optimistic that the school will play a vital role in shaping the future of our children and contributing positively to the community.

Thank you for your dedication to providing an exceptional education that goes beyond academics. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact of Novus SMART Academy on the lives of its scholars and the community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ashley Perry
ashleylperry@outlook.com

build. excel. sustain.

January 31, 2025

Rutherford County Schools,

This letter outlines my full support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager.

Jeremy is a 2023-2024 Fellow with Build. Excel. Sustain., a highly selective, nationally recognized non-profit that trains high-capacity leaders to design, found, lead, and sustain high-performing charter schools. I have worked closely with Dr. Sager through the Fellowship and observed his commitment to building a school with the community, his desire to lead with excellence, and the knowledge, skills, and experience he brings to this work. Jeremy is a truly committed leader with expertise in illiteracy education, post-secondary pathways, assessments, research, school operations, professional development, school leadership, and instructional coaching.

Jeremy has spent over a decade in education as a literacy and PLC coach, resident leader, dean, and principal. His experience spans a variety of schools and educational settings with a high emphasis on excellent school leadership and demonstrating measurable and improved academic outcomes for students.

Jeremy's vision for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is to inspire all scholars to unlock their full potential through extraordinary learning experiences that lead to successful college journeys and fulfilling careers, empowering them to positively impact society and achieve remarkable success in all aspects of life. To accomplish this, Jeremy has collaborated with many local organizations and stakeholders to design a school that responds to the community's needs. Additionally, the school and the founding team's vision taps into the collective talents and strengths of the students they intend to serve.

Likewise, Jeremy's experience in instructional coaching laid a foundation for a clear and coherent vision for a rigorous instructional approach and a school design. He has designed his proposed school to include social-emotional learning options that create an environment that affirms the voices of all students and builds them into exceptional scholars.

Working closely with Jeremy during this process has been a true privilege. His leadership and the intentionality behind his school model will ensure that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a high-achieving school that meets the needs of Rutherford County's scholars and families and is an asset to the region.

I fully support the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its lead founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager.

Best regards,

Dr. Chaundria Smith
Senior Director of Leadership Development, BES
csmith@bes.org 617-227-4545 x203

build. excel. sustain.

January 17, 2025

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
% Dr. Jeremy Sager
7257 Santeelah Way
Antioch, TN 37013

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for submitting an application to BES for startup funding. After careful review of your application, we are pleased to inform you that **BES has awarded Novus SMART Academy a startup grant in the amount of $15,000**. Congratulations!

Please note that for the current fiscal year, BES only has a total of $250,000 to be awarded as startup funding to BES Fellows, making funds limited. As a result, no award is greater than $25,000 during the first round of funding. If additional funding becomes available at any point during the Fellowship year, we will follow up with next steps.

This decision was made after carefully considering each applicant's access to other funding sources and current financial need, among other factors shared as part of the application process. **This award is contingent upon authorizer approval of your charter application by February 1, 2026, signing of the grant agreement, and completion of all milestones listed in the agreement.** As a reminder, the award is only to be used as startup funding during the school's planning year.

We are excited to support the great work you are leading and look forward to working alongside you moving forward. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Aasimah Navlakhi
CEO

BoardOnTrack

CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH FUND

Mike Mizzoni
Chief Governance Officer
BoardOnTrack

January 29, 2025

Rutherford County School Charter Schools
2240 Southpark Dr.
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Dear Members of the Rutherford County School Charter School Application Review Committee,

On behalf of BoardOnTrack, I am pleased to write this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy's charter application. As a nationally recognized organization dedicated to strengthening charter school governance, we are proud to partner with Novus SMART Academy to provide ongoing training, coaching, and strategic support in the establishment of a strong and effective governing board.

BoardOnTrack specializes in equipping charter school boards with the knowledge, tools, and best practices necessary to govern effectively. Through this partnership, Novus SMART Academy's board will receive expert guidance in key areas such as board development, strategic planning, compliance, and performance oversight. Our tailored coaching model ensures that the board operates with transparency, accountability, and a focus on student success.

We understand that a well-governed school is essential to achieving long-term success, and our partnership is designed to ensure that Novus SMART Academy's board is well-prepared to fulfill its responsibilities from day one. By leveraging BoardOnTrack's proven governance framework, Novus SMART Academy will establish a foundation of strong leadership and sustainable oversight, aligning with the high standards expected by Rutherford County Schools.

We appreciate your consideration of Novus SMART Academy's application and their commitment to best-in-class governance. If you have any questions or would like additional information about our partnership, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Mike Mizzoni
Chief Governance Officer
BoardOnTrack

BoardOnTrack

CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH FUND

BoardOnTrack Membership Overview

BoardOnTrack provides an annual membership that centers around an online platform custom-built for charter public school boards. Our suite of online tools builds an institutional memory, establishes best practice processes, provides board member level transparency and accountability against strategic goals, and includes self-paced professional development designed to meet the needs of busy volunteers and charter school leaders.

Shifting Board Work from Reactive to Strategic

A Partnership of Structured Support

Annual Membership Guides You Through a Continuous Improvement Loop

The annual membership follows a guided process that helps your governance team assess, align and accelerate.

ASSESS

Team Capabilities
Membership typically kicks off with the full board and CEO completing a series of assessments designed to highlight the board's strengths and areas to improve. The assessment data provides benchmark data on the board's capabilities relative to their peers nationwide.

Skills Inventory
The final component of the assessment phase is the completion of a skill inventory that will generate a 3-year board recruitment roadmap.

ALIGN
Once the assessments are complete, your BoardOnTrack coach will meet with the board leadership and CEO to review and prioritize the assessment results. Your coach will tee you up to lead a strategic conversation with the full board about the assessments results. The end result will be alignment among the board members and with the organization's CEO on the board's priorities for the year.

ACCELERATE
Once aligned on priorities the board will be guided to create a set of strategic board goals for the year that articulate the most important things the board needs to do to help advance the organization. These will be entered into the BoardOnTrack Board Goals Dashboard, and tasks will be assigned to individual trustees to ensure accountability and follow-through.

Your coach will be on hand to assist as needed with goal creation and the necessary committee work to complete the goals.

Operational Excellence
In addition to the strategic work described above, BoardOnTrack will provide coaching, support and online tools to streamline the logistics of the board.

Specifically, BoardOnTrack will work with a staffer designated by your CEO to create sustainable board and committee systems. This will include paperless meetings, building an institutional memory, streamlining compliance with open meeting laws etc.

BoardOnTrack

CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH FUND

Below is a sample of specific outcomes that most boards achieve during the first 90 days of membership.[1]

Great Boards...		First 90 Days Key Outputs
People Right Team	**Strong Board/CEO Partnership**	✓ Develop clear action steps to strengthen Board-CEO Partnership including a Succession Plan and a timeline to conduct an annual CEO Evaluation
	Engaged and Accountable Board	✓ 3-year board recruitment plan ✓ Revised committee structure ✓ Clarity on roles and responsibilities of full board, committees and staff in creating and sustaining effective governance ✓ Job descriptions for full board, individual trustees, officers and committees
Process Right Way	**Strategic and Efficient Meetings Institutional Memory Sustainable Board Operations**	✓ Action steps to shift board and committee meetings from reactive to strategic ✓ Institutional memory – all documents online and easy to access by all ✓ Online term limit tracker ✓ Streamlined meeting preparation and minute taking ✓ More efficient compliance with open meeting law
Performance Right Work	**Focus on Results**	✓ Clear set of Board goals for the balance of year that articulate how the board will add value ✓ Board clarify board's roles & responsibilities, are entered into an online dashboard, visible to all with ability to track in real time how engaged the team is in accomplishing agreed upon work at both a board and committee level

[1] This is a sample work plan. Customizations will be made based on the needs and timeline.

BoardOnTrack Online Platform

Specifically, the BoardOnTrack platform includes:

- 11 board assessments that the track development of your board against national standards
- Skills inventory and term limit tracker to ensure you have a 3-year strategic board recruitment roadmap
- Board goals dashboard for tracking progress towards agreed upon annual strategic goals
- Annual CEO evaluation tool to evaluate your CEO's performance
- Meeting management capabilities for agenda development and taking minutes, packet sharing, RSVP and attendance tracking, and meeting scheduling with calendar integration
- Online, centralized, document storage to build an institutional memory
- Publishing capabilities to make approved agendas and minutes automatically available on your organization's website for open meeting law compliance
- Library of online resources for board member professional development and self-paced training
- Quarterly Accelerator Sessions with BoardOnTrack governance experts

KDGi
102 S. Maple Street
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130
KDGi.solutions

January 17, 2025

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

Via Email: jsager@fellow.bes.org

Subject: Letter of Support for Novus SMART Academy

To Whom this May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the proposal for the Novus SMART Academy, being presented to Rutherford County Schools by Jeremy Sager. I am confident that you will find intriguing, Jeremy's passion for educational excellence, and his mission to partner with Rutherford County Schools to provide additional school options for our community's young scholars.

As a business owner and resident in Rutherford County, I am fully invested in the growth of our community. I have two school-aged children who attend our public school system, and I am proud of the strides that are being made to continuously improve their teaching environments. I hope that my journey in having obtained a graduate-level degree will have some bearing on the baseline and trajectory of our community's uprising scholars. The value that I place on education and NOVUS's well-manicured plan easily became drivers for me accepting the role as a non-voting Advisory Board Member for NOVUS Smart Academy.

Having an immediate understanding of trends in our exponentially growing community, such as the Rutherford County Schools rezoning plan, the Novus SMART Academy curricula will provide learning environments that are aligned with Rutherford County's goals of early intervention and high-quality academic instruction. The Novus SMART Academy will also be responsive in helping alleviate socio economic inequities that arise with rapid growth such as being experienced in Rutherford County.

I fully support the efforts of Novus SMART Academy to plant and grow an academic institution in our community. I hope that you will receive the proposal for Novus SMART Academy as beneficial and complimentary of the efforts that Rutherford County Schools are making.

Very Respectfully,

Brandon M. Harvey, AIA, NCARB, NOMA

President/Managing Partner

January 26, 2025

Dear Rutherford County Schools District,

I am writing in support of Mrs. Celest Davis, Dr. Jeremy Sager, and the entire Founding Team to open Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Charter School in the La Vergne and Smyrna communities.

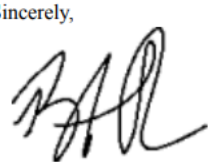
I have known Mrs. Davis for over 10 years and she is a prompt, organized, dedicated, and visionary leader. As a Founding Team member, her leadership qualities and skills will make a positive impact on families who choose Novus SMART Academy and the surrounding community. Mrs. Davis is equipped with the drive and dedication needed to bring this school into reality. Her role on the team with Dr. Sager and the entire Founding Team will be a positive support to facilitate tasks and lead governance initiatives to enhance the organizational development of Novus SMART Academy over time.

Mrs. Davis and Dr. Sager demonstrate positive leadership qualities in education and in our community. Mrs. Davis, specifically, demonstrated authentic leadership during her run for County Commissioner in Rutherford County. During this time, she stayed well organized, went from door to door, and listened to the thoughts and ideas it took to serve the community. Her dedication to the community successfully positioned her to become the First Vice Chair of the Rutherford County Democratic Party. Mrs. Davis is also dedicated to her family and has taken it a step further in their athletic interests by becoming a member of the Executive Board of the Smyrna Baseball League. She also volunteers for Carpe Artista and assists them with set design, as a parent chaperone, and teaches liturgical dance. Mrs. Davis also received recognition from the Town of Smyrna Mayor and Director of Parks for her volunteer efforts in the community.

Dr. Sager has been a successful educator for over 14 years with proven achievement to support the development of our students in the roles of a teacher, instructional coach, assistant principal, principal, and district coach. The vision of Novus SMART Academy will be the vehicle needed to close existing gaps in our current school district to meet the unique needs of individual students in our community. Dr. Sager also supports the community as a volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club in Smyrna as an after school tutor. With his passion for education, I am interested to see the two-teacher model in the classroom and how this will support the learning of students as they learn and develop over time.

I am sure that Mrs. Davis, Dr. Sager, and the entire Founding Team have the experience to support the needs of students and I fully support the opening of Novus SMART Academy in our Community.

Sincerely,



Brittany Russell, MBA, BS, AAS, RPSGT
brittanyrussellrpsgt@gmail.com

December 13, 2024

Dear Committee Member,

Building Hope would like to express support for Novus SMART Academy, a public charter school that plans to serve kindergarten through eighth grade in Smyrna, Tennessee. We believe the school will provide a unique teaching model for the underserved community.

In our conversations with the founder, Jeremy Sager, we were compelled by the school's vision and execution plan to guide the organization to both academic success and financial sustainability.

Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. If a site meets our underwriting criteria, Building Hope can develop the entire project for the school. Over the last 15 years, Building Hope has invested over $360 Million in charter school facilities, impacting over 150,000 seats nationwide.

We support Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy and recommend it for authorization.

Sincerely,

Jerry Zayets
Vice President, Real Estate Development
Building Hope
www.buildinghope.org

INDEPENDENCE
PREPARATORY ACADEMY

P.O. Box 417 | Fairfield, AL 35064
205.898.7505
info@learnatiprep.com
www.learnatiprep.com

January 22, 2025

Rutherford County Schools:

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the proposed Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Lead Founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager. As a founding member of the advisory board and someone deeply committed to quality education, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) holds tremendous potential to positively impact the educational landscape in Rutherford County.

Being the Founder and Executive Director of Independence Preparatory Academy in Fairfield, AL, and witnessing the transformative power of charter schools, I am convinced that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide a unique and innovative educational experience for students in this community. The focus to prepare students with the skills needed to collaborate appropriately with their peers, to think critically and creatively across all content, and to solve real-world challenges through Asset-based Learning (ABL) in Arts/Electives, and Character Education, Inquiry-based Learning (IBL) in Science and Research (i.e., Reading, Writing, and Social Studies), and Project-based Learning (PBL) in Science, Math and Technology aligns seamlessly with the needs and aspirations of the next generation student.

One of the key strengths of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is its commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The emphasis on ensuring all students succeed through delivering high-quality academic instruction using extended time and blended learning, specifically in literacy and math, with a strategic two-teacher model, reflects a dedication to creating a school culture that encourages academic excellence, critical thinking, and personal growth.

The comprehensive community engagement strategy also sets Novus SMART Academy (K-8) apart. The school will create a holistic learning experience beyond the traditional classroom setting by involving parents, local businesses, and community organizations.

Dr. Jeremy Sager is an experienced and dedicated educator with success in leading schools in the Nashville area. Coupled with the visionary leadership of the governing board, I am confident that the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) team will ensure the school's successful establishment and sustained growth. As a charter school founder, I understand the challenges and rewards that come with such an endeavor, and I am enthusiastic about the positive impact this school will have on the lives of Rutherford County students.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the approval of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). This school has the potential to become a beacon of excellence in education and contribute significantly to its students' intellectual and personal development.

Best regards,

Dr. Calandra Sales
Founder and Executive Director
CSales@learnatiprep.com
205-898-7505, ext. 1000

January 8, 2025

To Whom This May Concern:

This letter is to offer my full support to Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy Charter School, which has been proposed to be established in Rutherford County. Dr. Sager's astuteness to educate all students has been recognized throughout the State of Tennessee for yielding high student success rates and impeccable leadership as a documented school leader who led Nashville Prep to Reward School Status during the 2021-2022 school year.

As a current education practitioner, I know that it is imperative to have high-quality school options that focus on the whole child. I believe Novus SMART Academy Charter School will provide the support students need academically, socially, and emotionally to thrive and reach their fullest potential. As the school-aged population of Rutherford County continues to grow, families should have a choice as to which school their children should attend.

Dr. Sager is a well-accomplished educator that has numerous credentials and experience that will ensure that Novus SMART Academy will be a beacon of joy and educational achievement in the Rutherford County community. Therefore, I support Novus SMART Academy Charter School as an additional option for students and parents that deserve a high-quality education and I sincerely hope that this school will be approved as a charter school to begin operations during the 2026-2027 school year.

Respectfully,

Dr. Candra Clariette

Dr. Candra Clariette

CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH FUND

January 8, 2025

Rutherford County Schools
Attn: Jeff McCann, Coordinator of School Choice and Charter Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

Dear Mr. Jeff Mc Cann:

The Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) is a non-profit venture capital fund that invests philanthropic funds in the nation's highest-performing charter school operators to dramatically expand their impact on underserved students. To date, CSGF has funded over 1,000 schools that serve nearly 700,000 students in 34 states, DC and PR. The organizations in CSGF's portfolio currently serve a student population that is approximately 75% low-income and over 90% minority and represents some of the most successful public-school networks in the United States. Before making an investment, CSGF undertakes a rigorous due diligence process that considers all factors that may affect a charter organization's success.

Novus SMART Academy has applied for the CSGF Seed Fund, and they have moved forward to the semi-finalist diligence stage of our process. We are considering their school for a $250,000 planning grant. If approved, this grant will be contingent upon authorization and can only be used for operating expenses.

We are excited about Novus SMART's vision to prepare children for continued success.

Sincerely,

Soenda R Howell

Soenda Howell, Partner
Charter School Growth Fund

Jeremy Sager <jsager@fellow.bes.org>

Current State of Novus SMART Academy

3 messages

Jeremy Sager <jsager@fellow.bes.org> Mon, Oct 21, 2024 at 8:00 AM
To: Crystal McCarver <Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov>

Happy Monday, Crystal!

I hope this email finds you well. I wanted to personally update you on the recent developments regarding Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The Tennessee Public Charter School Commission made the decision to uphold the denial of our charter school application on Thursday, October 17th.

While this outcome was not what we had hoped for, we remain deeply committed to our mission. Throughout this process, we have received valuable feedback from both Rutherford County Schools and the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission. Their insights will allow us to revisit and strengthen key aspects of our application, positioning us for a better outcome in the next submission cycle beginning in December 2024.

This feedback has provided clarity on areas of improvement, particularly around our academic, operational, and financial plans. By addressing these aspects, we believe we will have a significant advantage moving forward. The process has been a pivotal learning experience, and we are more prepared than ever to deliver on the vision of a school that will provide high-quality, innovative education to our community.

Novus SMART Academy is moving forward with the following timeline to resubmit our application:

- Letter of Intent to Rutherford County Schools by December 1, 2024
- Initial Application Submission by February 1, 2025

This timeline provides us the opportunity to gain an approval as early as April 2025 with Rutherford County Schools, or an approval as late as October 2025 with the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission. When approved, we would be on track to open our doors in August 2026.

We remain optimistic about this new path forward and are confident that our strengthened application will lead to a successful outcome. Your support has been invaluable throughout this process, and we are incredibly grateful for your continued partnership.

I would love to speak to you regarding how this decision will impact our receipt of the CSP Grant. Thank you again for your belief in Novus SMART Academy.

Warm regards,

--

Jeremy Sager, Ed.D.
Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
Founder | Pronouns: he/him/his
Mobile: 615-663-9680
novusSMARTacademy.org | Facebook | Instagram
College and career begin in Kindergarten!!

Crystal McCarver <Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov> Mon, Oct 21, 2024 at 3:10 PM
To: Jeremy Sager <jsager@fellow.bes.org>

Good afternoon, Jeremy.

Thank you for the update. I am sorry that you have this delay, but the CSP grant will be available to you once you receive approval. I do not see any need for you to reapply for the CSP grant since you may still be able to get on track for the 2026-27 school year. If it goes beyond this time frame, we may have to rethink.

Crystal

TN Department of Education
Crystal McCarver | Senior Manager of Choice Grants

Division of Choice

Andrew Johnson Tower

710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243

(629) 259-0839

Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov
tn.gov/education

#TNBestforAll

We will set all students on a path to success.

From: Jeremy Sager <jsager@fellow.bes.org>
Sent: Monday, October 21, 2024 8:00 AM
To: Crystal McCarver <Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Current State of Novus SMART Academy

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[Quoted text hidden]

Jeremy Sager <jsager@fellow.bes.org> Mon, Oct 21, 2024 at 8:26 PM
To: Crystal McCarver <Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov>

This is great news. Thank you so much for the update.

Jeremy
[Quoted text hidden]

Franke FoodService Systems,
Americas
800 Aviation Parkway
Smyrna, TN 37167

David Parks
Market Manager –
McDonald's USA Accounts
Phone: +1-615-629-0850
Phone: +1-615-349-6986
Email: david.parks@franke.com

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

To whom it may concern,

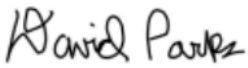
I am writing this letter in strong support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for the scholars and families of La Vergne and Smyrna Tennessee and Rutherford County district in Tennessee. Novus SMART Academy is proactively seeking equity practices in our current school model. I am very pleased to hear Novus Smart Academy is taking a strong stance on our young scholars below average grade level in math and literacy in the State of Tennessee, also focused on preparing our scholars for high school and college.

My name is David Parks and I reside and work in Rutherford County and have a valid concern regarding the state of our young scholars in receiving a high quality education. I have seen firsthand the direct impact of having a poor education due to overcrowding of schools, not enough educators, unfair rezoning of school districts, poverty and not enough resources. I strongly believe that our scholars and families having access to a high quality education is a vital part in unlocking the barrier of educational disparities.

Again, I strongly support Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for the scholars and families of La Vergne and Smyrna Tennessee and Rutherford County district in Tennessee as a high quality education option and hope that Novus Academy is granted a charter to open.

If you have any further questions and/or concerns, please contact me @ 1-615-349-6986.

Kind regards,



David Parks, BS, PMP

STEM PREPARATORY ACADEMY
1162 Foster Avenue, Nashville, TN 37210

January 12, 2025

Greetings,

I would like to express my full support for the application submitted by Dr. Jeremy Sager for the establishment of a new charter school, Novus Smart Academy, in Rutherford County, Tennessee.

As the CEO & COO of STEM Preparatory Academy in Nashville, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the transformative power of charter schools in providing a high-quality education, fostering innovation, and creating a positive impact on the lives of students. I worked closely with Dr. Sager in the past at LEAD Public Schools, and I know firsthand of his leadership excellence and his passion for education.

Novus SMART Academy shares our commitment to academic excellence, diversity, and student success. The proposed school's mission aligns seamlessly with the principles that have guided our own institution, emphasizing personalized learning, community engagement, and a focus on the holistic development of each student. Dr. Sager has a solid understanding of the educational landscape, a commitment to innovative teaching methodologies, and a genuine desire to address the unique needs of a diverse student population. I believe that the establishment of Novus SMART Academy will not only complement but also enhance the educational options available to families. The proposal's emphasis on Asset-Based Learning, Inquiry-Based Learning, and Project-Based Learning sets it apart as a valuable addition to our educational ecosystem, providing students with a well-rounded and enriching learning experience.

I am confident that the collaboration between our institutions could lead to mutually beneficial partnerships, fostering a supportive network that contributes to the overall educational well-being of our community. Such collaborative efforts can lead to the sharing of best practices, resources, and innovative strategies that benefit both charter schools.

In conclusion, I fully endorse the application for Novus SMART Academy. Thank you for considering my input and if you require any further information, or would like to discuss this matter in more detail, please feel free to connect with me. My cell phone number is 310-895-4656.

Respectfully,

Demetrius Greer
Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer

15, January, 2025

To Whom This May Concern:

As a school leader and education consultant, I am pleased to support the launch of Novus SMART Academy in the Rutherford County School District, led by Mr. Jeremy Sager.

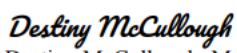
For nearly 20 years, my leadership and consultancy have focused on developing the whole child by providing equity, access, and disability inclusion to combat systems of oppression for a diverse community of learners to drive social change. As a former Tennessean, I celebrate Dr. Sager's efforts to create new opportunities and pathways for the families in Rutherford County.

National data shows that the overall reading and math proficiencies in Rutherford County are below the average. Additionally, the rates of special education students and discipline are significantly disproportionate. Novus SMART Academy seeks to address opportunity gaps using whole-child and diversity, equity, and inclusion approaches to teaching and learning. Therefore, Novus SMART Academy is poised to address the challenges and inequities students and families have faced for generations.

Through its curricula and nurturing the development of self for grades kindergarten through eighth, Novus SMART Academy is dedicated to connecting students' hearts, minds, and hands through critical thinking and problem-solving. This pathway reduces barriers to high school, college, and an independent life. As a current principal, I appreciate people who desire to change the trajectory of youth. Dr. Sager and I connected through our former school and district leadership and bonded over the desire for change in our community.

I have unwavering faith that Dr. Jeremy Sager will lead Novus SMART Academy to uncharted territory by providing educational equity and excellence for the students and families in Rutherford County.

Sincerely,



Destiny McCullough, M. S., Ed.
mccullough.destiny06@gmail.com

January 20, 2025

To: Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

To Whom It May Concern:

As an educational colleague and current charter school leader, I am writing this letter to express my wholehearted support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to be led by Dr. Jeremy Sager. During our time together at Power Center Academy High School (grades 9-12 in 38115), I had the opportunity to work under Dr. Sager where he demonstrated astonishing qualities of leadership, determination, consistency, and accountability. During his time as the Ninth Grade Academy Principal, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Sager offered virtual school experiences that allowed our students to thrive in uncharted territories, supporting all learning to ensure our students continued to demonstrate their love for learning, no matter the current circumstances.

I currently serve as the Director of Continuous Improvement for STRIVE Collegiate Academy in the metro-Nashville community. As a part of the school leadership team, I have personally witnessed the positive impact that a well-designed charter school can have on students' academic achievement, personal development, and on the surrounding community. As a launching pad for academic success, it is important that students have a strong rigorous educational foundation as a pipeline to nurture the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators.

The establishment of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a valuable investment in the future of the Rutherford County community, fostering a passion for STEM and preparing students for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contribute significantly to addressing the growing demand for high-quality education within the La Vergne and Smyrna communities, expressed in its current need for more school options. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the potential to become a beacon of educational excellence, inspiring other institutions to adopt similar models.

Again, I support Novus SMART Academy (K-8) as a high-quality option and hope that it will be granted to open in August 2026. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dominique Tross

Dominique Tross
Director of Continuous Improvement
STRIVE Collegiate Academy
dtross@strivecollegiate.org

From: Dwayne Tucker
Chief Executive Officer
LEAD Public Schools

To: Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

January 16, 2025

To Whom This May Concern:

I am excited to write this letter of support to endorse the opening of Novus SMART Academy Charter School and its Lead Founder, Dr. Jeremy Sager, in the Rutherford County community.

I met Dr. Sager professionally during his tenure as the Upper School Dean of Instruction at our LEAD Neely's Bend campus. He served and helped to move our TVAAS growth status from a Level 1 to a Level 5 in one school year, and he was responsible for bringing the National Junior BETA Club and the National Junior Honor Society to LEAD Neely's Bend. He believed that students deserved to have a well-rounded school experience, so he used his creative mind to integrate innovative ideas in our programming that families grew to love and appreciate.

Dr. Sager later went on to serve as Principal at Nashville Prep with RePublic Charter Schools, where he achieved TVAAS Level 5 Reward School Status, and was named a Public Charter School Changemaker by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. I have always been proud of his achievements as a school leader, and his ambitious mindset to accomplish goals that are greater than himself in service to others.

Our mission at LEAD Public Schools is to prepare all of our students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and in life. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s mission to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society definitely aligns with our mission and ethos of developing stronger communities through education. Students across the nation deserve to attend schools that offer a high-quality education so that they can live productive and fulfilling lives, whether they choose to go to college or to pursue a career after high school. I believe Novus SMART Academy will provide its students with opportunities that will change their lives and the community surrounding them.

To that end, I wholeheartedly endorse the opening of Novus SMART Academy, and as a partner in education, wish Dr. Sager and this organization much success in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Tuck
Dwayne Tucker
Chief Executive Officer
LEAD Public Schools
dwayne.tucker@leadpublicschools.org

January 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Kindly accept this letter of support as Dr. Jeremy Sager seeks to develop Novus SMART Academy in Rutherford County, Tennessee. As a parent of three sons who all matriculated through Rutherford County Schools, I am especially supportive of a school concept such as Novus SMART Academy. Additionally, as an active member of the Rutherford County community, I'm excited at the prospect of another great academic choice for our families.

Although my family and I have fond memories of many excellent Rutherford County Schools teachers and administrators, I believe that each of my sons could have benefitted from more culturally diverse instruction and leadership. I look forward to lending my support as a general citizen to this initiative. Furthermore, I plan to include Novus SMART Academy as I professionally seek STEM partnerships and opportunities for Middle Tennessee State University students and their instructors.

Should you have questions or wish to arrange discussion regarding my level of support, please feel free to contact me directly at echelleady1@yahoo.com. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Echell Eady, EdD
Rutherford County Resident

EdConnect

Dear Rutherford County Schools Charter Application Review Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of support for Novus SMART Academy and its charter application to serve K-8 students in our community. As the CEO and Founder of EdConnect and a former Assistant Commissioner over Student and Family Services at the Tennessee Department of Education, I have had the privilege of working closely with the board of Novus SMART Academy during their planning and development phases. I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and thoughtful approach they have taken to ensure this school meets the educational and developmental needs of the students and families it intends to serve.

EdConnect partnered with Novus SMART Academy in 2024 to design a comprehensive community engagement and outreach plan that prioritizes authentic connections with families in the service areas identified by the board. Through this collaboration, we aimed to create meaningful avenues for families to voice their aspirations, concerns, and ideas for their children's education. This level of engagement is crucial in fostering a sense of ownership and trust between the school and the community it serves.

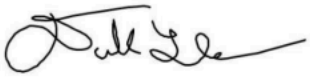
Additionally, EdConnect facilitated a strategic partnership between Novus SMART Academy and GrowthFuel Marketing to enhance their outreach efforts and strengthen their presence in the community. GrowthFuel's expertise in developing targeted campaigns has been instrumental in ensuring that the school's mission and vision reach families who will benefit most from its innovative approach to education. By leveraging both traditional and digital platforms, this collaboration has allowed Novus SMART Academy to build awareness and cultivate relationships that are critical to its success.

In my capacity as a former Assistant Commissioner, I have seen the transformative power of quality educational options for students and families. The need for a school like Novus SMART Academy in the identified service areas is evident. The academy's commitment to integrating rigorous academics, a focus on STEM, and a nurturing environment aligns with the aspirations of many families seeking a pathway to success for their children. Furthermore, the school's proactive efforts to involve the community in its planning and decision-making process reflect a model of inclusive and responsive education.

I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will be a valuable asset to the Rutherford County Schools community. Its thoughtful planning, commitment to excellence, and focus on fostering strong community relationships position it for long-term success and significant impact. I respectfully urge the Charter Application Review Committee to approve Novus SMART Academy's application, as its vision aligns with the educational goals of our community and the aspirations of the families it seeks to serve.

Thank you for considering this letter of support. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 770-743-7611 or danielle@edconnectnow.org if you have any questions or require additional information regarding my experiences working with Novus SMART Academy.

Sincerely,



Dr. Danielle LeSure
CEO and Founder, EdConnect

160 Pearl Moss Ln, Kathleen, GA 30147
770-743-7611, danielle@edconnectnow.org
www.edconnectnow.org

January 26, 2025

Rutherford County Schools Authorizer Review Committee

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a native of the Smyrna community. I grew up in Smyrna. I attended school here and graduated from Smyrna High School in the class of 2012. I also attended Motlow State Community College. Now I have children of my own who will start school over the next 2-5 years and I am looking for a different option for my children. An intimate environment that will cater to my diverse family. I feel Novus SMART Academy will be a great option for my children. I am looking forward to it.

Novus Smart Academy has a well-structured plan for a charter school with a proven values based curriculum that will be offered in a moral and wholesome environment. It represents the school choice many in our area are asking for. I wholeheartedly support Novus Smart Academy as a welcome addition to our community's educational choices.

Please accept this letter of support for Novus Smart Academy to open a school in our community in 2026. I am confident that Dr. Sager's years of excellent experience in education will provide our children with an innovative, challenging, creative, and rigorous education and opportunities to grow and lead. Please vote to approve and give the families in our community the school choices they've been asking for.

Sincerely,

Eric J. Majors
Team Consultant
629.201.3214

Erika Coleman-Mitchell
606 Virginia Belle Drive
Smyrna, TN 37167

January 11, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my support for the opening of Novus SMART Academy, a proposed Kindergarten through 8th grade school for the families of Rutherford County, Tennessee. As a resident of Smyrna, I believe this school will play a crucial role in providing students with an exceptional educational experience that prepares them for high school, post secondary, and beyond. Since most students attending schools in LaVergne and Smyrna are performing below the statewide average in math and English Language Arts, I understand the need for our students to have a more rigorous educational program that combines high-quality curricula and instructional practices as well as a focus on personal growth, innovation, and creativity.

The mission and vision outlined for Novus SMART Academy align with the values I have for educating our youth. Offering rigorous curricula will ensure that students are academically challenged and well-prepared for higher education and their future careers. Additionally, the emphasis on innovation and creativity is vital in preparing students to contribute meaningfully to society. The school's commitment to nurturing personal growth will ensure that students develop into well-rounded individuals with a strong sense of purpose and self-awareness. Novus SMART Academy's approach to education will empower students to thrive on their chosen paths and contribute to the development of future leaders who will shape a better world.

As a result, I wholeheartedly support the opening of Novus SMART Academy and believe that it will provide a high-quality option for the students and parents in Rutherford County. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Erika Coleman Mitchell
erika.coleman@comcast.net

ARCHITECTURE
INTERIORS

MZA 516 HAGAN STREET SUITE 100 NASHVILLE, TN 37203 T 615.256.2880 MZARCH.COM

January 30, 2025

Rutherford County Schools Charter Application Review Committee

To Whom it May Concern,
As a member of the Novus SMART Academy Facilities Taskforce, I am the Architectural consultant providing support in the form of feasibility assessment during the facilities acquisition process.

Should you have any questions regarding my role as a member of the Facilities Taskforce, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ethan V. Levine
Co-Owner, Architect
Manuel Zeitlin Architects LLC
O 615-256-2880
D 615-988-1874

ARCHITECTURE
INTERIORS

MZA 516 HAGAN STREET SUITE 100 NASHVILLE, TN 37203 T 615.256.2880 MZARCH.COM

January 30, 2025

Jeremy Sager, Ed.D.
Novus SMART Academy

Proposal for services at: 102 Ridley Street and 105 Threet Industrial Road, Smyrna, TN 37167

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for considering MZA for predesign services of your project. We appreciate the opportunity to work with you.

Project Overview: Feasibility studies for Novus SMART Academy (client) at two proposed facilities. We understand the client is seeking to open a new public charter elementary school in one of two existing facilities. Both locations are not currently operating as educational facilities and may require improvements to accommodated the proposed use. We understand the client's General Contractor (GC) is providing preconstruction and estimating services in support of this effort.

Scope of Services: Our basic services are described below.

Task 1: Existing Conditions

- Facilities visit to gather photographic records and field notes.
- Review of existing facilities documentation which may include original construction drawings, as built drawings, and maintenance records.
- Preliminary Building Code Review.
- Coordinate with the clients General Contractor (GC) as needed to facilitate their existing conditions review.

Task 2: Test Fit

- Using the client's program, existing building drawings and preliminary building code review, produce test fit space plans to illustrate potential space utilization and required building improvements. Individual spaces will be labeled and/or codified by color to identify use and function.
- Produce a schedule of spaces organized by use and function to tabulate gross areas.

Task 3: Feasibility Report

- The report will include a narrative describing the work performed and the findings from Tasks 1 and 2.
- Exhibits will include existing conditions documentation, preliminary building code review and test fit drawings.
- Construction estimates provided by the client's GC may also be included.

January 11, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for the opening of Novus SMART Academy as a charter school serving students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade in Rutherford County under the leadership of Dr. Jeremy Sager. I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Sager when he did a short-term residency at our school, Crosstown High, in the fall of 2023. During his time with us, Dr. Sager spent a lot of time with our staff and students, both learning from the work we are doing, as well as sharing and getting feedback on his school plans. We were impressed with his vision for Novus and his commitment to providing a high-quality educational option for the students of his community.

As a co-founder of a charter school myself, I understand the type of hard work and perseverance it will take to successfully launch and grow and based on my interactions with Dr. Sager, I believe that he has what it takes to open a school that will be an asset to the region and its students. Our team is particularly excited to see another school implementing inquiry-based and project-based learning in Tennessee. The school's commitment to equity-centered support with culturally-responsive strategies, as well as character development, is also something that we believe will add tremendously to the educational landscape of our state.

Thank you for considering this recommendation. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ginger Spickler
Director of Growth & Sustainability
Crosstown High
gspickler@crosstownhigh.org
901-216-2162

HEATHER
EST. 2021
BELLGARDT

January 23, 2024
To whom it may concern,

As a former educator with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, it is my pleasure to express my support of Novus SMART Academy Elementary School as an addition to the Rutherford County, Tennessee Public School System. Expanding the options for quality education to reach underserved populations is an important step in the right direction to ensure all children have the opportunity for growth as they develop a firm foundation to one day help them reach their full potential.

It has been my personal experience as an educator of 20 years, that smaller class sizes along with team teaching opportunities, available at Novus SMART Academy, allow for a more individualized learning experience. Novus SMART Academy's Two-Teacher Model, smaller class sizes, and 1 on 1 instruction opportunities will effectively create a quality educational experience affording students the opportunity to benefit from a more personalized learning experience. Novus SMART Academy's SMART Model is a proven effective way to create interdisciplinary connections which will no doubt afford young scholars a comprehensive understanding of where they may flourish through character development and community relationships.

I strongly believe that Rutherford County will benefit as a whole from the addition of Novus SMART Academy. An additional choice in quality educational experiences for our youth, especially through the student-centered model of Novus SMART Academy, will be a welcome addition to ensure success and a brighter future for our future generation of leaders.

Heather Bellgardt

Sincerely,

Heather Bellgardt
Former School Educator

METRO NASHVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 11, 2025

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Dr.
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), a new charter school planning to open in the fall of 2026 in Rutherford County, Tennessee.

I have known Dr. Sager personally and professionally for a little over two years. Prior to his current role as the proposed CEO and Lead Founder at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), he served as my English/Language Arts (ELA) counterpart, leading the secondary literacy program for all our priority schools in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). We worked side-by-side to successfully support the turnaround work of MNPS priority schools, recently "graduating" three schools (2 middle, 1 high) in the last three years.

Dr. Sager is also well versed in the world of Charter, having successfully served as a principal for Republic Schools in Nashville. He is passionate about ensuring ALL students have access, and the supports needed, to receive a high-quality education. His career has focused on supporting student success for historically marginalized populations. His position at MNPS was designed to support school leadership, literacy coaches and teachers in an effort to break the cycles of providing an inequitable and disproportionate education to students. Dr. Sager's journey as an educator is not a career, but rather a labor of love.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a unique opportunity for Rutherford County Schools to "close the gap" and to become a model school/district in Tennessee to provide all students with an equitable education so that they may become productive, well-balanced, critical thinkers. Although Rutherford County exceeds Tennessee's averages in many ways, our State continues to underperform when compared to the national average. When considering the urban regions of Rutherford County, that dynamic (predictably) shifts. Although 38% proficient in math and 43% proficient in ELA exceeds TN norms, it is still far below the ideal of 80% or better.

Dr. Sager has proven, both in his prior work and in MNPS, that he is a vision-driven and "boots on the ground" servant leader working to improve opportunities for our students. I am honored to support Dr. Sager and Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in becoming a model for schools in Tennessee and across the nation.

Sincerely,

Heather M. McMillin
Lead Secondary Numeracy Specialist
Schools of Innovation
heather.mcmillin@mnps.org

RUTHERFORD
COUNTY TENNESSEE

September 5, 2024

Rutherford County Schools
Charter Schools Review Board

Dear Review Board,

As a County Commissioner and a public school graduate, I absolutely advocate for public education. Rutherford County has one of the best public school systems in the state of Tennessee and in the United States. However, in our current Legislative climate, charter schools are now in Rutherford County.

As a staunch advocate for public education, I also believe in the power of diversity in schooling options that serve our communities' needs. Charter schools, when effectively designed and operated, could offer an innovative approach to achieving educational excellence within the public school framework. They can provide parents and students with additional choices that cater to different learning styles, cultures, interests, and emotional needs, which is essential as Rutherford County becomes increasingly more diverse.

I have had the opportunity to view Novus SMART Academy's curriculum and find it to be robust, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive. As you review the Novus SMART Academy's application, do so under conditions that ensure transparency, accountability, and an equitable review. Like Springs Empower Academy, which you have approved, Novus SMART Academy aims to complement, not compete with, Rutherford County public schools by working collaboratively with you to share best practices within our community.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Hope Oliver, District 1

Rutherford County Commission

Jaavia Manning, LMSW
LaVergne, Tennessee Resident

January 26, 2025

Dear Charter Authorizer Review Committee:

I am elated to provide this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy. I attended a Charter School in Eastern Illinois with 1 on 1 attention from my teachers and they had an excellent administration staff.

When I transitioned to Middle Tennessee, I noticed how stressed teachers were. I did not have a relationship with my principal like in my past school experiences in Illinois, and I had to advocate for myself often. There were no teachers that looked like me, no school culture to support people like me, and I felt just like a number.

Personally, my kids will never attend a traditional public school; however, I will 100% enroll my kids in a charter school, where teachers can actually teach and give attention to those students how they need it. I believe in charter schools, and specifically Novus SMART Academy, to better prepare students for college and the rest of their lives.

Sincerely,

Jaavia Manning, LMSW
manningj618@gmail.com

Jade D. Miller, Esq.
470 Irwin Way
Spring Hill, TN 37174

January 25, 2025

Re: Novus Smart Academy

Greetings to the Rutherford County Charter Authorizer Review Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy led by Dr. Jeremy Sager.

As a student educated exclusively in the state of Tennessee, I recognize the importance of having exemplary academic institutions in the community. Whether public, private or charter, families should have the opportunity to choose the best educational environment for their students.

The program that Dr. Sager has envisioned for Novus in Rutherford County will be an asset to the community and a valuable resource to students and families on their educational journey. The school's plan to be student-centered, focused on developing the whole child with an emphasis on character development reinforces my belief that this model of education is what we need to prepare young people academically and for life.

Growing up with parents who are educators, I learned very early that schools are often tasked with caring for the whole child and by understanding and embracing this from its inception, Novus is definitely positioning itself to thrive and succeed.

Accordingly, it is with great pleasure that I fully support the approval of Novus SMART Academy.

Sincerely,

Jade D. Miller, Esq.

James Deenihan
Director of Program Development
LeveragED Foundation
jdeenihan@leveragedfoundation.org

January 29, 2025

To the Rutherford County Charter School Review Committee,

I am pleased to offer my strong support for Dr. Jeremy Sager's application to establish Novus SMART Academy, a visionary charter school dedicated to academic excellence, character development, and career readiness. Having worked closely with Jeremy through the LeveragED Cohort Experience, I have witnessed firsthand his commitment to leadership development, capacity building, and effective governance—qualities that will serve him well as a school founder.

Jeremy was an active and engaged participant in the LeveragED Cohort, where he leveraged our Problem of Practice framework to explore complex leadership challenges. Through this experience, he sought critical feedback from a diverse group of education leaders, refining his approach to adult capacity building and board relations. His ability to integrate new perspectives into his leadership strategy demonstrated a willingness to grow, adapt, and innovate, all of which will be essential in launching and sustaining a high-quality charter school.

Novus SMART Academy's SMART-integrated School Model, which emphasizes Science, Math, Arts/Electives, Research, and Technology, aligns with Jeremy's belief in holistic student development. Moreover, the school's focus on character education, and college and career exploration reflects his deep understanding of what students need to thrive in both academics and life. His leadership in these areas is further reinforced by his proactive approach to building strong board governance structures, ensuring that Novus SMART Academy is set up for long-term success.

Jeremy Sager exemplifies the qualities of an effective and forward-thinking school leader. His dedication to continuous learning, accountability, and his strategic approach to governance make him an exceptional candidate to lead Novus SMART Academy. I have no doubt that under his leadership, the school would positively impact students, families, and the broader education community.

I strongly endorse Jeremy's application and encourage your full support of this endeavor. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide any additional insight.

Sincerely,

James Deenihan
Director of Program Development
LeveragED Foundation

Teach For America
Nashville-Chattanooga

January 16, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jeffrey Takiue, Director of Educator Leadership with Teach For America in Nashville and Chattanooga. I am a retired educator, spending 21 years in the Hawaii Public Schools as a teacher, academic officer, and principal. Three years ago, I moved to Smyrna with the hopes of providing my three children with better opportunities. After exploring our options, I chose to place my children at a small private school in Smyrna. Throughout my research, I was disappointed to see the academic outcomes of the various public schools in Smyrna.

Jeremy Sager and I connected a year ago and he shared his vision for Novus SMART Academy. I was immediately impressed with the depth of his passion and his extensive preparation of starting a new public charter school. He was able to answer the many questions I had about the school's strategy, planning, growth, and leadership. Jeremy shared his background and the support system he has with the BES Fellowship. I believe he has the strengths, skills, and support to be an excellent school founder.

In addition to Jeremy's talents, I was very impressed with his heart for the Smyrna and La Vergne community. Jeremy and I share the belief that schools have the ability to catalyze change for not only students, but for the entire community. Jeremy shared the strategies of how Novus is engaging families and community partners. His thoughtful and patient approach is a strategy I have seen build authentic and genuine relationships with all school stakeholders.

In looking at the student outcome data for Smyrna and La Vergne schools, I am saddened by the results. I have no doubt that every educator in every classroom is trying their best to support students. However, when you have perpetually lower student outcomes, the root cause is often the larger systems within the school and the district. Over time, school systems develop an inertia that is difficult to break.

Charter schools have proven to be an effective strategy to break that inertia in school districts. I believe that Novus SMART Academy, under Jeremy's leadership and vision, will attract and develop a staff that is able to have agile decision-making that is responsive to the needs of their students.

I strongly support Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy for their charter approval.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Takiue
Director, Educator Leadership
Teach For America Nashville Chattanooga
tfanashchatt@teachforamerica.org

Jennifer Jones, Ed.D.

854 Beech Bend Drive

Nashville, TN 37221

615.618.8732

Jennifer.Jones2@mnps.org

January 11, 2025

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to offer my support for Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy, which he is proposing to establish. Students in La Vergne, Smyrna, and the greater Rutherford County community deserve the best in teaching and learning.

Dr. Sager and his development of Novus SMART Academy embodies the characteristics needed to provide an inclusive and equitable learning environment that will engage and challenge students to reach their full potential for career and college readiness. With the support of the community and partnership with Rutherford County Schools, I firmly believe that Novus SMART Academy will propel the growth of every student that enters its doors.

Dr. Sager's experience as an administrator, instructional coach, teacher, and BES Fellow has built his capacity to design, found, and lead a high-quality school focused on implementing researched-based practices and strategies. Dr. Sager has a profound ability to build relationships that nurture and foster growth, inspire change, and encourage hard work. These skills will serve Rutherford County Schools and Novus SMART Academy well as he recruits students and builds community support overall.

I urge you to authorize Novus SMART Academy as an additional school option for students in the Rutherford County Schools district.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Jones, Ed.D.
Lead Literacy Coach, MNPS

January 30, 2025

RCS Charter Application Review Committee

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the Novus SMART Academy charter application as a Real Estate Advisor and specifically in my role on the Facilities Task Force. As a local commercial real estate agent and resident of this community, I have been actively involved in supporting Novus in securing a suitable facility for the Academy's future location, and I am committed to ensuring that the facility acquisition process proceeds smoothly and on schedule.

As part of the Facilities Task Force, I am collaborating with other key stakeholders, including Christian Hill (Board Member), Tyler Baier (Level Field Partner), and Ethan Levine (Architect), among others, to identify potential commercial real estate options within the targeted community. Our task is to find a space that is not only compliant with all applicable regulations but also meets the Academy's operational needs and budget constraints.

Once under contractor lease in the due diligence phase we will be working closely with experienced contractors and compliance experts to monitor and guarantee that all necessary construction or facility upgrades are completed on time. Regular check-ins and proactive planning, including contingency strategies like temporary classroom spaces, are in place to address any unforeseen delays.

Additionally, Novus is building strong community partnerships with local faith-based and non-profit organizations to explore co-location or short-term leasing options. We are leveraging my extensive real estate network and expertise, alongside Christian Hill's experience at Keller Williams, to negotiate potential lease terms and explore all viable options within our community.

Our partnership with Level Field Partners, who have successfully overseen more than 130 charter school facility projects, and Building Hope, a national non-profit dedicated to charter school facilities, further strengthens our ability to secure a facility. Building Hope has also committed to providing up to $250,000 in support for due diligence, security deposits, and program test fits once the charter is approved.

Lastly, the Academy's Proposed Executive Director is leveraging resources through the Build. Excel. Sustain. fellowship program, which offers valuable guidance during the pre-launch phase, further ensuring that we have the support and expertise necessary to navigate the facility search successfully.

We are confident that with our combined expertise, strategic partnerships, and dedicated efforts, Novus SMART Academy will secure a facility that will allow us to serve our students and community effectively.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available to discuss any questions or provide further details about the work we are doing.

Sincerely,

Josh Fulmer, Real Estate Advisor, Compass RE
Facilities Task Force Member, Novus SMART Academy
josh@fulmerhomes.com

ANTIOCH
MIDDLE SCHOOL

To: Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

January 22, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Kathyrn Abid Ali and I am writing this letter in support of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Dr. Jeremy Sager. I had the pleasure of working with Dr. Sager when he was a Lead Literacy Specialist for Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Dr. Sager was an asset to our Literacy Department and demonstrated strong leadership skills. His communication skills and kindness are two of his attributes I remember the most. Part of his responsibilities as my Lead Literacy Specialist were to support me in my role as a school-based Literacy Coach. Dr. Sager communicated our District expectations and initiatives clearly. He always made time for my questions and responded in a timely manner. He was also such an uplifting, positive, solutions-focused leader. His balance between strength and compassion will be very important in his role at Novus SMART Academy, which aligns to his vision to support scholars through Asses-based Learning in Character Education.

Please accept this letter of support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Dr. Jeremy Sager. I am confident that Dr. Sager will continue to be a great leader in the capacity of CEO/Lead Founder.

Kathryn Abid Ali

Kathryn Abid Ali, M.Ed.
Literacy Coach
Antioch Middle School
Metro Nashville Public Schools
kathryn.abidali@mnps.org

K&H

Kayce A. Howard

PHILANTHROPIST & ENTREPRENEUR

Kayce Howard
102 Ridley Street Smyrna, TN 37130
Rutherford County
1-29-2024

Rutherford County Schools Authorizer Review Committee
2240 Southpark Drive, Murfreesboro TN 37128
Rutherford County

Dear Members of the Rutherford County Schools Authorizer Review Committee,

I am writing to you as a dedicated philanthropist, Rotarian, mentor, entrepreneur, and a lifelong leader in the Rutherford County community. My commitment to enhancing the lives of our young adults and children, particularly through education, has been a cornerstone of my work. Today, I wish to extend my wholehearted support for the charter application of Novus Smart Academy (K-8), which aims to open its doors to our Rutherford County Founding Scholars and Families in August 2025.

As someone who has dedicated her life to making our community a better place, I recognize the profound impact that a high-quality educational institution can have on the lives of its students and, by extension, the community at large. Novus Smart Academy (K-8) is not just another school; it is a beacon of hope and a promise of a brighter future for our children. This school will provide a high-quality option for parents seeking an innovative and nurturing learning environment for their children.

My involvement with the Rutherford County Alternative Schools, providing uniforms, nonperishable food items, hygiene items, and recruiting positive, impactful speakers, has reinforced my belief in the transformative power of education. These experiences have shown me the critical need for educational institutions that not only impart knowledge but also instill values, foster creativity, and nurture the overall well-being of our young learners.

I am excited about the potential of Novus Smart Academy (K-8) to bring about positive change in our community. It aligns perfectly with my mission to touch lives and create lasting impact. I pledge my support to this noble endeavor and look forward to collaborating with the school once it is operational. Whether it is through resource provision, mentorship programs, or community initiatives, I am committed to ensuring that Novus Smart Academy (K-8) thrives and serves as a model of excellence in education.

In closing, I urge the Rutherford County Schools Authorizer Review Committee to recognize the potential of Novus Smart Academy (K-8) to enhance the educational landscape of our county. This institution promises to be a pivotal addition to our community, nurturing the minds and hearts of our future leaders.

Thank you for considering this application and for your ongoing commitment to the education of our children. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of our young generation.

Sincerely,

Kayce Howard
Philanthropist, Rotarian, Mentor, Entrepreneur, Community Leader
Rutherford County Native

615-796-0773 info@thekaycehoward.com
102 Ridley Street Smyrna, TN 37167 www.alertcdc.org

Asenath E. Johnson
Charter President
Kiwanis Club of Rutherford County

Smyrna, TN 37167
aejohnsonkiwanis@gmail.com
Contact: (615) 335-4085

January 28th, 2025

ATTENTION: RCS Charter Application Review Committee

Dear Members of the RCS Charter Application Review Committee,

As President of the Kiwanis Club of Rutherford County, I am writing in support of the endeavors of Dr. Jeremy Sager, the CEO/Lead Founder of Novus SMART Academy. Dr. Sager's vision and dedication to providing high-quality education and character development are truly inspiring.

The mission of Novus SMART Academy, which is to provide scholars with an extraordinary learning experience where college and career begin in Kindergarten, aligns seamlessly with the values and goals of Kiwanis. Our organization is dedicated to improving the lives of children and fostering community engagement, and Novus SMART Academy embodies these principles through its commitment to high-quality academic instruction, character development, and relentless ambition for success in life.

I would also like to highlight the contributions of Dr. Jeremy Sager, an active member of our Kiwanis Club, who has been instrumental in supporting our organization's community engagement efforts. Dr. Sager's dedication and involvement have significantly enhanced our initiatives, and his commitment to the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy is evident in his work.

I wholeheartedly endorse Novus SMART Academy's charter application and believe that it will make a significant positive impact on our community. I am confident that the academy's dedication to academic excellence and character development will inspire and empower future generations of leaders.

Thank you for considering Novus SMART Academy's charter application. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Asenath E. Johnson

Asenath E. Johnson
Charter President, Kiwanis Club of Rutherford County

Memphis Merit Academy Charter School

Lakenna Booker
Founder and Head of School
Memphis Merit Academy Charter School
4775 American Way
Memphis, TN 38118
lbooker@memphismeritacademy.org
901-240-1009

January 19, 2025

Charter School Review Committee for Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Subject: Letter of Support for Novus SMART Academy Charter School Charter Petition

Dear Rutherford County Schools, ,

I, Lakenna Booker, Founder and Head of School of Memphis Merit Academy Charter School, am writing to express my wholehearted support for the charter petition submitted by Novus SMART Academy, a kindergarten through 8th-grade charter school in Rutherford County, Tennessee. As the Founder and Head of School at Memphis Merit Academy Charter School, I have had the privilege of collaborating with the Lead Founder of Novus SMART Academy, Mr. Jeremy Sager.

I am pleased to inform you that Memphis Merit Academy had the honor of hosting Mr. Sager during a fall residency, providing him with a firsthand experience of the work involved in founding and operating a high-performing charter school. Through our residency program, Mr. Sager had the opportunity to immerse himself in the mission of Memphis Merit Academy, which is centered around rigorous academics, high-quality instruction, and character development for scholars in kindergarten through 8th grade.

As the Lead Founder of Memphis Merit Academy and a former BES Fellow, I understand the challenges and dedication required to successfully establish and operate a high-performing charter school in an underserved community. During Mr. Sager's residency, I provided guidance and support, sharing best practices in areas ranging from data analysis to daily operations. I have witnessed Mr. Sager's dynamic leadership and his commitment to the mission of creating a school aligned with the values and principles that make Memphis Merit Academy successful.

Memphis Merit Academy Charter School

I am proud to serve on the advisory council for Novus SMART Academy, further underscoring my belief in the school's mission and vision. Novus SMART Academy is designed to provide an extended school day and year, crucial elements in delivering a robust academic program. Much like Memphis Merit Academy, Novus SMART Academy recognizes the significance of extended time for foundational literacy development and the cultivation of essential skills in mathematics and reading.

Moreover, Mr. Sager understands the importance of fostering a strong school culture that is both motivating and invigorating. The school model is structured to provide a supportive learning environment with high expectations for behavior, academics, homework performance, and character development. These elements are fundamental to the academic success of children in Memphis, and I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will contribute significantly to the educational landscape of Rutherford County.

The core beliefs of Novus SMART Academy, centered on the belief that all students can and will learn at high levels, align seamlessly with my own convictions. I firmly believe that all students possess the resilience and potential to excel on the path to college, and we need more schools like Novus SMART Academy in Tennessee's underserved communities to ensure equal opportunities for all students.

In conclusion, I humbly request your support in authorizing Novus SMART Academy Charter School to provide a promising future for the families in Rutherford County. I am confident that the school, under Mr. Sager's leadership, will make a lasting and positive impact on the educational journey of its students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lakenna Booker
Founder and Head of School
Memphis Merit Academy Charter School

McGuire Management

January 26, 2025

Rutherford County Schools Authorizer Review Committee

To Whom It May Concern:

I learned about the Novus Smart Academy through a colleague of mine who is a founding board member of the new potential charter school in our school district.

I appreciate what Novus Smart Academy is planning to do via the new charter school. Introducing children to expanded learning opportunities before high school not only helps with self-esteem and personal development but also helps students better understand subjects and make real-world connections.

I work with many parents and employees in our area who seek additional options for their children's education. To add a unique learning experience as offered by Novus Smart Academy is wanted and needed for the future of our community.

With the academy being a charter school in this district, students will be provided with more opportunities to learn, grow, and become contributing citizens to our community. Developing a real understanding and love for turning business ideas and concepts into reality will not only provide children with opportunities in the future but will also support job creation and economic development in our community.

Please approve the petition to charter.

Sincerely,

Lilly Miranda

McDonald's #34518
General Manager of Restaurant Operations
2674 New Salem Hwy,
Murfreesboro, TN 37128
321.662.4753

January 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support **Novus SMART Academy founder Dr. Jeremy Sager**, a dedicated transformative leader. As a colleague, I have had the privilege of witnessing Dr. Sager's commitment to a data-driven approach to building capacity for student success. As cohort members in New Leaders, New School, Dr. Sager showed up to each session with an eagerness and intentionality committed to better understanding the various demographics and socio-economic barriers our students in the city faced. He was determined to understand and committed to implementing the latest research-based practices to ensure his school was trending in the right direction.

Dr. Sager has consistently shown best-practice leadership skills with distinction in bringing together diverse experts to develop personal goals and assist with personal and professional development related to education through the National Society of Leadership and Success. Dr. Sager held us accountable while assisting our group in achieving our personal and professional goals. At the end of the sessions, I built strong, lasting relationships with phenomenal and successful individuals in the education sector.

Under Dr. Sager's leadership through collaboration in the National Society of Leadership and Success, I was fortunate to be promoted to Director of Early Childhood Services. This personal goal has allowed me to grow my leadership skills. Dr. Sager as a mentor in my new position promoted a strong sense of community, consistently supported my innovative ideas, and ensured that my role as a Director of Early Childhood Services aligned to Novus SMART Academy's vision to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, encourages innovation and creativity, and nurtures personal growth so that scholars will thrive in their chosen college and career paths and make a positive impact on society.

It is a pleasure and honor to give my full support to Dr. Jeremy Sager, a servant and transformational leader.

Respectfully,

Lindsay Porter, Ed.S

Director of Early Childhood Services
Office: 901-545-5450
23 S. Idlewild Street, Memphis, TN 38117

January 12, 2025

From: Mariah Phillips, M.Ed.
Rutherford County Resident & Community Advocate
Former Rutherford County Schools Teacher
Rutherford County Schools Parent
mariahnp@icloud.com

To: Dr. Jeremy Sager
Proposed CEO and Lead Founder
jsager@fellow.bes.org

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Rutherford County Schools and the Authorizing Committee,

I enjoyed having the opportunity to hear about the Charter School, Novus SMART Academy, which Dr. Sager hopes to bring it to the Rutherford County community in 2026. He is putting together an impressive board of consultants who can guide this work through next steps.

As expressed to Dr. Sager, I am a passionate supporter of traditional public education and believe that first investments should seed our existing schools and make them as great as they can be. I also recognize that in large school settings, such as those in Rutherford County Schools, the needs of some students may not be fully met, so bringing a high-quality and well-run charter school may help to fill some gaps that exist in the traditional structure.

The pivotal statement is high-quality and well-run, because not all charters are created the same and there is significant research that shows it is not the opening of the school that makes it better, it is the school's ability to educate the whole child, as well as the accountability measures in place, that help students thrive.

Based on Novus SMART Academy's needs assessment and identified focus on early intervention using a two-teacher model approach in the classroom, I feel confident that this school is doing its due diligence to produce a charter school that can achieve its desired results. Dr. Sager's prior experience as Principal at RePublic in Nashville, a school with top marks from the state, has shown us first hand about his practices of running a successful school program.

Rutherford County Schools has some of the best schools in the state already. The charters that are authorized must be schools that focus on pedagogy not demagogy. I believe Novus SMART Academy is on track to bring that perspective to our county.

Sincerely yours,

Mariah Phillips, MEd.
511 E Clark Blvd
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130
615-987-7620

LA VERGNE
TENNESSEE

5093 Murfreesboro Road
La Vergne, TN 37086
(615) 793-6295
lavergnetn.gov

January 23, 2024
Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Greetings!

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this letter of support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and their Charter School Application.

I am aware and appreciate what this Academy can and will offer for parents, as well as school-aged children in our community. We should continue to support high value options for our students wherever possible.

Warm Regards,

Jason Cole

Mayor Jason Cole
City of La Vergne

Gestalt
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

January 12, 2025

From: Michelle Jones-Wright
Director of School Culture

To: Dr. Jeremy Sager
Proposed CEO and Lead Founder

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

Subject: Letter of Support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Dear Rutherford County Schools and the Authorizing Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy, a transformative educational initiative that promises to bring invaluable benefits to the Rutherford County community. As a K-12 Culture Supervisor of a grassroots charter school, I have closely reviewed the proposal for Novus SMART Academy and am impressed by its vision, mission, and potential impact on the proposed educational landscape.

The proposal outlines a comprehensive educational approach that embraces innovation, personalized learning frameworks, and community outreach programs. These elements, combined with the dedication of the Novus SMART Academy team, make this initiative highly deserving of your consideration and approval.

Novus SMART Academy seeks to address the unique needs of the Rutherford County community by ensuring students have access to a rigorous curriculum and high-quality instruction. This targeted approach reflects a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities within our educational system, and it aligns seamlessly with the aspirations of students and families in the community.

The curriculum and instructional methods proposed by Novus SMART Academy are not only academically rigorous but also designed to foster critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong love for learning that will empower the lives of students and their families. The innovative educational strategies presented in the proposal can set a new standard for excellence in the community.

What particularly stands out to me is the academic programming of inquiry-based, asset-based, and project-based learning programs, which demonstrates a commitment to meeting the diverse learning needs of all students. The inclusivity and equity embedded in Novus SMART Academy's vision make it an ideal candidate for approval, as it addresses the importance of providing a quality education for every child.

Gestalt
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

I am also impressed by the community engagement efforts outlined in the proposal. Novus SMART Academy has sought input from parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders, reflecting a commitment to collaboration and a desire to create a school that reflects the community's values and aspirations.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the approval of Novus SMART Academy. The innovative and student-centered approach, coupled with the dedication of the team, positions Novus SMART Academy as a beacon of educational excellence that will positively impact the lives of students and contribute to the overall advancement of the Rutherford County community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will become a vital asset to our educational community in Tennessee, and I look forward to witnessing its positive influence on the future generations it serves.

Sincerely,

Michelle Jones-Wright
Director of School Culture
mwright@gestaltcs.org

MOTLOW STATE

January 9, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

As an educational partner in Rutherford and surrounding counties, I am writing my letter of support on behalf of Motlow State Community College, for which I serve as president of the institution, for Novus Smart Academy Charter School. Every day in the field of higher education, I am faced with helping students make life choices that impact them for years to come. Preparation at the K-8 level and beyond is of the utmost importance for students as they prepare to transition to secondary education, higher education and their future careers.

Rutherford County is growing. It is important that our community provides parents and their children options for education that can support their need and the needs of our growing community. Novus Smart Academy Charter School is set to do just this. In addition to supporting the school at the K-8 level, Motlow is committed to coming alongside Novus Smart Academy to further their students' educational opportunities through potential early college opportunities in the future.

As an educator, I believe that a high-quality education is vital to the quality of life and economic prosperity of our community. I believe that Novus Smart Academy will provide that quality of education for Rutherford County. I support their application for charter whole heartedly.

Please feel free to reach out to me for any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Torrence, Ph.D.
President
Motlow State Community College
mtorrence@mscc.edu

empact

Subject: Expressing Support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the authorization of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). I believe that the mission and the vision demonstrate a level of clarity about the team's desire to provide scholars with access to rigorous curriculum while also fostering a love for learning.

As a former educator, I understand the importance of creating an environment for all students to thrive and I believe that Dr. Jeremy Sager is laying the groundwork for what will become a hub of innovation, creativity and personal growth that exceeds the status quo.

I am particulay impressed by the comprehensive plan that includes Inquiry-based learning, learning and leverages a two-teacher model. These components are a recipe for success, and I believe they prepare scholars to succeed in the short and long term.

I wholeheartedly support the establishment of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and believe it will become a cornerstone in the educational landscape of Rutherford County. I look forward to championing the success of this soon-to-be fully authorized charter school for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Nautrie Jones
Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer
Empact Work
www.empact.work
(404)372-2365

January 11th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I eagerly pen this letter of support for Dr. Jeremy Sager as he works to design a scholar-centered academic program in partnership with Rutherford County Schools.

I was personally introduced to Dr. Sager during his role as Freshman Academy Principal at Power Center Academy High School in Memphis, Tennessee. As his Leadership Coach, my role included supporting Dr. Sager and his Leadership Team as they implemented research-based work to support freshmen scholars. This work included developing systems that focus on data analysis and next-step planning to ensure that freshmen scholars receive the support needed to remain on track for on-time graduation and experience post-secondary success.

I found Dr. Sager's abilities to be outstanding! At the start of our work together, Dr. Sager began with the most important part of leadership- relationship building. His teachers were eager to meet the established expectations because of the culture of collaboration he fostered. He also involved scholars in both the planning and implementation phases of systems development, and because of this, they were compelled to meet, and they exceeded, the social and academic goals that were collaboratively set.

I have no doubt that Novus Smart Academy will benefit scholars both socially and academically, providing them with authentic and applicable learning opportunities. Dr. Sager is an excellent planner, and his openness to feedback allows for a continuous improvement methodology that will make for a successful learning environment.

I am eager to read of the success the scholars of Novus Smart Academy will experience, and I am willing to support Dr. Sager as he works diligently to bring this rewarding educational opportunity to the scholars and families of Rutherford County, Tennessee.

For the children, always!

Nina Reed

Dr. Nina Reed
Educational Leadership Coach
The Center for High School Success
nreed@highschoolsuccess.org

January 29, 2025

Dear Rutherford County Schools Charter Review Committee,

I am pleased to write this letter of support on behalf of Jeremy Sager, Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy. My name is Darryl Denning, and I represent Panache Catering, where we are dedicated to providing high-quality food services that meet the nutritional needs of students.

I have had the privilege of working with Jeremy Sager in his previous leadership roles and can personally attest to his dedication, professionalism, and genuine concern for student well-being. Jeremy is an exceptionally talented leader whose vision extends beyond academic excellence—he is committed to shaping global achievers through high-quality instruction, character development, and an unwavering ambition for success. His leadership consistently fosters environments where students can thrive both academically and personally.

Nutrition plays a critical role in student success, and I firmly believe that Jeremy understands the importance of providing healthy, well-balanced meals that support learning and development. His passion for student achievement, combined with his ability to build strong, effective partnerships, makes him the ideal leader for Novus SMART Academy. Under his guidance, I am confident the academy will provide not only outstanding education but also the necessary nutritional support to help students reach their full potential.

I wholeheartedly support Novus SMART Academy and encourage the Rutherford County Schools Charter Review Committee to consider the immense value that this institution will bring to the community. Please feel free to reach out if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Darryl Denning
Founder and Head Chef
Panache Catering Inc.

(615) 289-0987
dinning@tds.net

January 20, 2025

Paula F. Jones
2817 Kingfisher Dri
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for the establishment of Novus SMART Academy. Novus SMART Academy's goals that I believe are very important are to serve the traditionally underserved through college preparation. I grew up in Alabama. I was a very smart kid from what was considered a financially poor family. Therefore, this type of educational environment would have been ideal for a child like me and others who I knew showed great potential but did not have the specialized learning opportunities that Novus SMART Academy desires to provide this community.

I have lived in Rutherford County since July 2012, and I have had the privilege of raising my son here. Rutherford County provides a great school system; however, I chose to allow my son to attend a private Christian school. For me, this private Christian school experience for my son with a rigorous curriculum was most attractive. In addition, I know that my son is being aggressively and intentionally prepared for college after high school. Schools like Novus SMART Academy will offer families like mine similar opportunities without tuition costs.

With the middle Tennessee area growing so rapidly, in my opinion, there is room for exceptional and specialized school options like Novus SMART Academy. I wish Dr. Jeremy Sager and his team great success as they move through this process. If there is additional information required, please contact me at paula.jones3@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

//e.s.//
Paula F. Jones, MS, SPHR
www.linkedin.com/in/paulajones3

Carpe Artista, Inc.
Board of Directors

Aaron Conklin
Adam McKeown
Andre Swauncy
Corinne Morse
Ron Alley
Susan Gulley
Walter Alley

*****

Ron Alley
CEO/Founder

Cat Bacelieri
Director of Development

Jonathan &
Linda Sutton
Book Keeping
Associate

Rob Higginbotham
Academy Director

Becca Alley
Camp Director

Robin Haynes
Academy Admin.

Karen Smith
Academy Admin.

115 Front Street
Smyrna, TN 37167
615-984-4040
615-984-4038

www.carpeartista.com

www.facebook.com/
carpeartista

To Whom It May Concern,

This is a letter expressing excitement and support for the formation of Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus Smart Academy as a charter school in Rutherford County. We have entered into conversations with Dr. Sager regarding future partnerships between Novus Smart Academy and Carpe Artista Arts Academy.

Novus Smart's stated mission of "career preparation" is very much in line with Carpe Artista's mission for creating career path training in entertainment and the arts.

We look forward to further conversations with the leadership of Novus Smart regarding Carpe Artista Academy providing instruction in music, visual art, theater and production with them to their students.

Ron Alley
Cheif Executive Officer/Founder
Carpe Artista (Seize The Arts)

Shercobia Gordon-Hall
Schools of Innovation Literacy Lead
shercobia.gordon-hall@mnps.org

1019 Taylor Street
Pulaski, TN 38478

January 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am delighted to write this letter of support on behalf of Dr. Jeremy Sager and Novus SMART Academy (K-8). I have worked with Dr. Sager for the past year at Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools in the Innovative Schools department as a district lead. I have always been impressed with his uncanny ability to get things done. Dr. Sager is attentive, methodical, and made a lasting impact in our department and with the schools that he serviced. His commitment to professionalism and productivity makes him a joy to work with.

Dr. Sager has a very positive attitude and was a very supportive colleague. His interest in helping students, principals, and all stakeholders that he worked with allowed him to make meaningful and lasting connections. It is very clear that he is a critical thinker while being very attentive to details. He is very aware of nuance and extremely skilled in synthesizing information to make informed decisions that directly affects the interest of all participants.

When I learned of his leaving from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, I was deeply saddened at our department's loss. However, Dr. Jeremy Sager's vision for founding Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is nothing short of amazing and will make an excellent additional school option to scholars and families in Rutherford County. Without hesitation I praise his abilities and performance in every aspect of his professional career. I believe his vision to provide all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society speaks to his leadership capacity and love for students and their families. He's ready for the leadership role of Executive Director and can handle any task, large or small, presented to him.

Please feel free to contact me by email (Shercobia.gordon-hall@mnps.org) or cell phone (615-241-6904) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Shercobia Gordon-Hall

Shercobia Gordon-Hall

Small Blessings Childcare

January 31, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I hope this letter finds you well. As a childcare provider in Smyrna, Tennessee, I am writing to express my strong support of bringing a charter school to this area. I believe charter schools provide a higher quality of education and could be very beneficial. Middle Tennessee is rapidly growing. I work with some very smart children who are our future and I would hope they have the best opportunity to learn to be their best in our community.

It is with great enthusiasm that I support this Charter School. If you have any more questions, feel free to contact me at (615)573-5542.

Best Regards,

Shia Bates

NCC Nashville Charter Collaborative

Letter of Support for Novus SMART Academy

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

January 29, 2025

I am writing this letter to enthusiastically support the proposal of Novus SMART Academy. This K-8 school will provide the students and families in Rutherford County with a high-quality educational option. The careful thought and consideration in the academic model create an environment where teachers can reach various students with different learning styles. The three-pronged approach of asset-based, inquiry-based, and project-based learning with two teachers in the classroom, K-5, will ensure that our students start their academic journey on strong footing and are exposed to various learning opportunities.

The Nashville Charter Collaborative is the lead advocate for public charter schools in Nashville. We provide valuable resources around student and family support for schools, elevate school leaders and their best practices, and support the navigation of the authorizing and accountability processes. After spending time with Jeremy Sager and learning more about his vision for the students of Rutherford County, I am excited by the mission and vision of this leader. Jeremy has a history of strong leadership but his deep passion for responsive teaching and ensuring that he creates an environment that fosters a love for learning is what sets him apart as someone that we are confident will improve not just the academic outcomes but the life outcomes of those students that attend Novus SMART Academy.

I am confident that the addition of Novus SMART Academy will contribute positively to the education of the students in Rutherford County. With a research-based academic model, a thoughtful parent partnership program, and a true passion for embracing innovation and creativity in service for great life learning, this charter school proposal is particularly compelling and deeply needed within the community.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impact that Novus SMART will have in Rutherford County.

Sincerely,

Subira Gordon
Chief Executive Officer
Nashville Charter Collaborative
subira.gordon@nashvillecharter.org

edtec
Business and Development Specialists for Charter Schools

DATE: January 22, 2025

TO: Rutherford County Schools

FROM: Terence Washington, Business Development Manager-East for EdTec Inc.

RE: Letter of Support for Novus Smart Academy Petition Approval

I am writing in support of the Novus Smart Academy charter school petition that is under consideration for your approval.

Based on EdTec Inc.'s considerable experience since 2001 in working with numerous charter school development teams and operating charter schools, we offer the following statements of support for your consideration:

- EdTec has been working with Novus Smart Academy for several months and has developed a strong working relationship with the Novus Smart Academy development team.
- Our assessment of the team and the organization is that they are capable, conscientious, and dedicated to providing a rich instructional program to the students and communities to be served.
- If the Novus Smart Academy petition is approved, the school plans to contract with EdTec for its comprehensive charter school back-office support services. EdTec will provide its expertise, guidance and support in the successful launch and business operations of the school.

EdTec has built an excellent reputation with charter schools and their authorizers throughout the nation for providing the highest quality business and operations support. A brief EdTec company description is below and a detailed description of the specific support areas that Novus Smart Academy plans to contract with EdTec is included with this letter (Attachment 1).

EdTec Inc.
Business & Development Specialists for Charter Schools

EdTec is a social venture founded in 2001 to develop, support and advance quality charter schools. Our exceptional team has provided unparalleled expertise and support to over 250 charter schools and charter developers across a comprehensive range of services.

EdTec provides business, educational support and school software solution services – exclusively to charter schools. EdTec's economies of scale deliver senior, experienced personnel specializing in various areas of school management, development of benchmarks and best practices.

We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that the Board may have regarding our services and how we plan to support the Novus Smart Academy staff and board. Please let us know if EdTec can be of further assistance.

We look forward to the potential of supporting the launch and operations of the school and to the potential of working with **Rutherford County Schools**.

Best Regards,

Terence Washington
Business Development Manager-East
Email: twashington@edtec.com
Tel: 470-523-3317

Attachment 1
EdTec Back-Office Services Support Detail

1. FINANCE and ACCOUNTING

Budgeting:

- Annual and multi-year budgets including cash flows – In the spring or when services begin, EdTec works with the school leader to create annual and multi-year budgets in time for submission to the state before July 1. EdTec strives to ensure that the annual budgets are strategic documents that capture the operations and direction of the school.
- Budget revisions (as needed, on demand) – EdTec revises budgets as needed to reflect changing circumstances at the school or in the state funding.
- Updated monthly budget forecasts – EdTec tracks budget to actuals and updates the budget forecast on a monthly basis (if forecasts move materially off budget, we recommend a budget revision).

Financial Statements:

- Monthly year-to-date financial statements – EdTec prepares YTD financials compared to budget in time for the monthly board meeting. (For schools with board meetings before the 15th of the month, EdTec will furnish the financials and presentation prior to the board meeting; otherwise EdTec sends the financials and presentation as part of the board package ahead of the meeting.)
- Monthly cash flow projections – EdTec monitors the school's cash position and tries to anticipate any cash shortfalls in future months so the school can adjust spending accordingly or attempt to secure cash flow loans (EdTec may provide short-term cash flow loans to its full-service clients that meet EdTec's lending criteria to cover payroll).
- Financial statement analysis (monthly) – In addition to financial statements, EdTec provides a succinct PowerPoint summary and analysis of the financial statements so Board and staff can quickly focus on the salient financial issues facing the school.
- Customized financial analysis – EdTec performs reasonable financial analysis that the staff or board requests, e.g. providing a comparative analysis of the school's budget relative to industry norms or fulfilling a request from the authorizing entity. EdTec will also provide customized reports (within reason) for grant proposals.
- Support in resolving financial issues – EdTec helps the school leader find solutions to financial issues by recommending budget changes and/or identifying sources of potential funding.

Accounting:

- Setup of school's chart of accounts and general ledger – EdTec sets up and maintains the school's chart of accounts, based on EdTec's standard structure which is designed to be compliant with GASB.
- Customized account codes – EdTec maintains customized account codes for unique features of the school program. These are established at the beginning of the fiscal year to avoid re-coding of historic transactions.
- Fund accounting – EdTec tracks revenue and expenditures by fund, e.g. implementation grant funds and expenses or Title I expenditures.
- Training – EdTec trains appropriate school personnel on accounting procedures and practices designed to ensure accurate record keeping.
- Transaction recording – EdTec records in detail all transactions in a computerized accounting system.Journal entries and account maintenance – EdTec prepares and records journal entries and maintains the general ledger according to accepted accounting standards.
- Bank reconciliation – EdTec reconciles primary bank and investment accounts to general ledger monthly or upon receipt of statements. Revolving and petty cash accounts are reconciled quarterly or as required.
- Account for Capital Outlay Expenses – EdTec records capitalized assets as provided by the school. On an annual basis, EdTec records related depreciation and amortization in the general ledger and reconciles expenditures to fixed asset listing.

- Generate financial reports as requested – EdTec can generate the following reports upon request: detailed account activity; bank register activity; summary of budget, expenditures by account; cash balances; payroll register (for periods when payroll is processed by EdTec); revenues; general ledger account balances.

Accounts Payable & Receivable:

- Revenue verification – EdTec verifies that the school is receiving the correct amount of funds.
- Revenue collection – if the funds from the state or the county/district are not correct, EdTec tracks down the appropriate officials and alerts them of the problem. EdTec will use reasonable efforts to negotiate on behalf of the school in disputes with funding agencies over improperly calculated payments.
- Accounts Payable – EdTec processes all invoices and, pending approval from the school leader or surrogate, pays the bills and codes them in the financial software, typically on a two-week schedule with limited rush payments as needed. EdTec checks to make sure there are no double payments or double billings on multiple invoices. EdTec troubleshoots payment issues with vendors. EdTec also verifies that funds are available to pay the bill.

Purchasing:

- Vendor selection – EdTec provides recommendations of vendors based on its experience with vendors around the state and country.
- Purchasing assistance on big-ticket items – EdTec can assist the school leader in its purchase or leasing of big ticket items such as portables.

Audit:

- Audit support – EdTec prepares financial documents for the auditors and works side-by-side with the auditors to help ensure a smooth and timely audit process. For clarification, the school is responsible to pay auditor fees. The school shall also provide all non-financial records required by the audit – e.g. attendance records, employee records, teacher certifications.
- Audit compliance training – EdTec helps the school leader and staff develop financial policies that meet audit requirements and help protect the school from financial mismanagement.
- Single Audit Act of 1984 – EdTec provides support in school compliance with accounting related audit requirements, including the Single Audit Act of 1984.
- IRS Form 990 Support – EdTec supports the school and auditor in preparing Form 990 tax-exempt organization annual filing. (For clarification, fees for audit and 990 are paid by school).
- The school is responsible for attendance and audit of employee work.

2. PAYROLL and HUMAN RESOURCES

Payroll:

- EdTec uses an external payroll processor to accomplish the following tasks. EdTec interfaces between the school and payroll processor, and performs quality checking so that the school does not need to interact with the payroll processor. The school pays payroll processing fees.
- Payroll Processing – EdTec calculates and processes payroll and payroll-related payments/deductions for salaried and hourly employees based on information submitted by authorized School representatives (excluding vacation and/or sick time tracking). EdTec generates checks for signature by authorized School representatives (or through electronic signature) or facilitates Direct Deposit at the School's request. EdTec processes payroll monthly.
- Payroll reporting – EdTec prepares and files all required payroll reports for submission to federal and state agencies and submits electronic payroll, payroll tax reports and payroll tax deposits to the appropriate authorities.
- Payroll record maintenance – EdTec keeps track of employee payroll information. School maintains employee files (based on EdTec-provided template files).
- W-2 and 1099 processing – EdTec prepares and sends Forms W-2 and 1099 to employees and government.

3. INSURANCE

- Insurance procurement – EdTec advises the school on the insurance quote process.
- Insurance administration – Upon request, EdTec can assist in communications between the insurance company and the school to facilitate claims processing.

4. BUSINESS CONSULTING

- Negotiations – EdTec supports the school director and board in negotiations related to issues such as MOUs, facilities, and SPED with districts, landlords, vendors, and others, including developing presentations and analyses to buttress the school's position.
- Strategic Budget Development – EdTec can assist the school director and board with strategic financial planning and budget scenario development.
- Financing support – EdTec assists schools in preparing loan packages and connecting the school with non traditional/specialized funding sources such as New Market Tax Credits, Low Income Investment Fund resources, and philanthropic funds.
- Legal services management – EdTec can help manage legal services to keep costs down.
- Special Projects – EdTec performs business-related special projects within reason, such as finding food service providers, analyzing transportation options, and modeling growth and facilities scenarios. (Note that EdTec does not assist schools with qualification as a provider of subsidized school meals.)

5. FACILITIES

- Facility needs assessment and planning – EdTec works with schools to identify facility needs based on the school program and industry standards. EdTec helps schools think creatively about their facility needs and come up with workable solutions.
- District negotiations – EdTec will help the school negotiate deals with the district regarding facilities.
- Facility search – On a separate fee basis, EdTec assists real estate agents to identify possible school sites and cost out tenant improvements.
- Facility acquisition/lease negotiation – On a separate fee basis, EdTec assists schools in negotiating purchase and/or lease terms and helps to develop loan packages for facilities and identify likely lenders. The school's attorney should review these.

6. CHARTER DEVELOPMENT and GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

- Financial reports – EdTec prepares customized financial reports for grant purposes.
- Fund accounting – EdTec sets up fund accounting to track direct and allocated costs to grants.
- ConApp – EdTec prepares and files the ConApp parts 1 and 2 for eligible schools.
- Grant writing – On a separate fee basis, EdTec can do grant prospect analysis and write grants.
- Charter renewal – On a separate fee basis, EdTec will prepare and advocate a charter petition for school renewal.

Terry Ross, Ph.D.
160 S. Hollywood Street
Memphis, Tennessee 38112

January 12, 2025

Rutherford County Schools
2240 Southpark Drive
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37128

Dear Rutherford County Schools Board Members,

I am writing to wholeheartedly endorse Dr. Jeremy Sager for the establishment of the Novus SMART Academy K-8 charter school in Rutherford County. Having known Dr. Sager since our time together in MCS/MSCS during Efficacy Trainings, in 2011, I have witnessed first-hand his unwavering dedication and competence in the field of education.

Dr. Sager's impressive tenure as a District Instructional Literacy Coach and a PLC Coach at Treadwell Middle School laid a strong foundation for his leadership skills. His participation in the Emerging Leaders Program with New Leaders for New Schools is a testament to his commitment to continual professional growth. Moreover, his experience as a Curriculum & Instruction Team Writer and an English Teacher at Craigmont High School illustrates his deep understanding of academic content and effective teaching strategies.

One of Dr. Sager's most commendable qualities is his ability to manage complex relationships and work effectively with diverse communities. This skill, coupled with his passion for urban public education and a long-term commitment to K-12 public education, makes him an ideal leader for Novus SMART Academy. Dr. Sager's previous role as School Principal at Nashville Prep with RePublic Charter Schools, where he achieved TVAAS Level 5 Reward School Status, showcases his exceptional capability in school leadership. His recognition as a 2022 Public Charter School Changemaker by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools further validates his expertise in transforming schools in academics, culture, and operations.

The mission of Novus SMART Academy is both ambitious and necessary: providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction. This mission, coupled with an innovative academic plan that includes extended time and blended learning, a strategic two-teacher model, and a focus on Asset-based Learning, Inquiry-based Learning, and Project-based Learning, positions the academy as a beacon of educational excellence.

Dr. Sager's track record in leadership, management, and his ability to foster an environment conducive to learning and personal growth is unparalleled. Under his guidance, I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will not only achieve but surpass its goals, ultimately benefiting the scholars of Rutherford County and the broader community.

I urge the board to support the establishment of Novus SMART Academy K-8. Dr. Jeremy Sager is the ideal candidate to lead this innovative and much-needed educational initiative.

Thank you for considering this endorsement.

Sincerely,

Terry Ross, Ph.D.
Highly Specialized Advisor
Memphis Shelby County Schools
terry@newteacheru.org

Thomas Branch
Chief Operating Officer
Valor Collegiate Academies
4523 Nolensville Pike
Nashville, TN 37211

Jan 10, 2025

Rutherford County Schools

To Whom It May Concern,
I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and its proposed CEO/Lead Founder, Jeremy Sager. I have had the privilege of knowing Jeremy for a few years now, and have witnessed firsthand his unwavering commitment to K-12 education, passion for student success, and exemplary leadership skills.

I have been consistently impressed by Jeremy's integrity, work ethic, and dedication to improving educational outcomes for all students. Jeremy's academic background, including a Doctor of Education in Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning, and his extensive experience in education, make him a highly qualified and capable leader for Novus SMART Academy.

Novus SMART Academy's mission and vision align seamlessly with the values and goals of the broader education community. The commitment to providing scholars with rigorous curricula, fostering a love for learning, and promoting personal growth reflects a dedication to excellence that is essential for student success. The innovative academic focus and plan outlined in the Novus SMART Academy Abstract demonstrate a thoughtful and strategic approach to addressing the unique needs of scholars in Rutherford County, Tennessee.

The need for Novus SMART Academy is evident when considering the educational landscape in Rutherford County. While overall performance in math and English/Language Arts in the county is commendable, the data indicates a gap in achievement for scholars in La Vergne and Smyrna. Novus SMART Academy has identified this gap and is poised to provide a solution through high-quality academic instruction, extended learning time, and a strategic two-teacher model.

Moreover, the proactive approach of Novus SMART Academy to partner with Rutherford County Schools and address the challenges presented by the countywide rezoning plan demonstrates a commitment to equity and inclusivity. By providing an

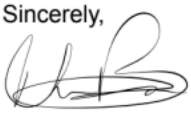
additional school option, Novus SMART Academy aims to support scholars and families, ensuring that they have access to high-quality education without uprooting them from their current communities.

Jeremy Sager's track record of success and accomplishments in education, including achieving TVAAS Level 5 Reward School Status and being recognized as a 2022 Public Charter School Changemaker, attests to his ability to lead Novus SMART Academy towards academic excellence and positive transformation.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and Jeremy Sager as the proposed CEO/Lead Founder. Their commitment to providing exceptional educational opportunities aligns with the values we hold dear in the public school community. I am confident that Novus SMART Academy will play a pivotal role in enhancing the educational landscape in Rutherford County and making a lasting impact on the lives of scholars and families.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any additional information or support.

Sincerely,



Thomas Branch
Chief Operating Officer
Valor Collegiate Academies

CHILD SUPPORT DIVISION
OFFICE OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY GENERAL
16TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
20 PUBLIC SQUARE NORTH
3RD FLOOR
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
PHONE (615)898.8060, FAX (615) 848-5138

I am writing to express my support for the new Charter School. I'm a resident of Rutherford County and I believe that a Charter School will be an asset to Rutherford County. As I believe the Charter School will provide an educational choice to families, one with rigorous academics and core values of safety, community, diversity, fun and personal growth.

I support the approval of a new Charter School to serve students in our community. I would be pleased to see a school of choice in the community.

Sincerely,

Tijuania Garrett
Child Support Administrator
20 N. Public Sq
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
615.898.8002

Gestalt
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

January 10, 2025

Dear Rutherford County Schools:

I am writing to support Novus SMART Academy charter school and its leader, Dr. Jeremy Sager. Through Dr. Sager's K-12 school experience, professional knowledge, and community engagement. I am sure his leadership and potential new school will make a difference in your county.

I have known Dr. Sager professionally since 2016. He was hired as a Power Center Academy Middle School Dean of Instruction. As Dean, he was responsible for instructional coaching, curriculum implementation, and site-based school assessments. During his tenure, the school maintained a Level 5 TVAAS status and met their annual academic targets. Dr. Sager provided sound professional development and coaching programs for our teachers. Later, Dr. Sager was promoted to the position of school leader at our Ninth Grade Academy campus. The Ninth Grade Academy provides bridge programming to increase high school student's success and preparation.

Throughout Dr. Sager's tenure with Gestalt Community Schools, Dr. Sager provided both instructional and operational leadership. As an instructional leader, Dr. Sager developed and facilitated high-quality professional development that addressed our teachers' development and students' instructional needs. As an operational leader, he strategically and ethically managed resources, and assigned and scheduled staff roles and responsibilities that helped to optimize their capacity and address our scholars' learning needs.

Dr. Sager balances instructional and operational leadership to set the foundation for an effective charter school in Rutherford County Schools. Novus SMART Academy will provide an educational experience that will change the trajectory of their students' lives by providing authentic, real-world instruction within a Project Based Learning environment.

Sincerely,

Yetta Lewis

Yetta Lewis

Chief Executive Officer

Gestalt Community Schools

Attachment E Cover Page

Student Handbook and Required Forms
REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

NOVUS SMART ACADEMY (K-8)

Scholar-Family Handbook
2026-2027

College and career begin in Kindergarten!!

Overview

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will open its doors to 192 scholars and families in Grades K-1 in the fall of August 2026. We are committed to providing high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations, which are the foundation of our mission, vision, and Noble Core Values.

Mission

Novus SMART Academy provides scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career begin in Kindergarten.

Vision

Novus SMART Academy produces global achievers through high-quality academic instruction, character development and relentless ambition for success in life.

Noble Core Values	Meaning
Academic Excellence	We believe our scholars and families deserve access to a high-quality academic educational experience that fosters a relentless drive for academic success, innovation, and personal growth.
Beacon of Joy	We emanate JOY as ripples of inspiration, fostering a positive school culture of belonging(ness), acceptance, and character development for our scholars and families, teachers and staff members, and members of our school community.
Character Development	We promote values that cultivate self-awareness through the development of essential life skills, transforming lives and impacting our community for generations to come.
Habits for Humanity	We foster a school community as changemakers, partnering together to model transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of greatness, and making a positive impact on the world.
Intellectual Curiosity	We believe in fostering rigorous learning experiences between our teachers and scholars as they question, discover, and pursue knowledge relentlessly with rigorous curricula.

College & Career Begin in Kindergarten

Establishing a culture where scholars and families, teacher and school leaders, and staff members understand the importance of college and career readiness is our priority at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). High quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations allow us to provide and sustain a consistent learning environment for our scholars. Over time, consistency builds trust, and trust builds investment and authentic engagement. When we celebrate our scholars for modeling our Noble Core Values, we invest in their goals of choosing their college and career paths. For scholars to access high-quality academic instruction in the classroom, teachers must have high behavioral expectations for their scholars.

Scholar-Family-School Commitments & Accountability. We are committed to fostering a positive school environment for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members so that every minute of the school day yields positive results. We know scholars and families deserve and have the right to attend schools that promote learning and achievement, pushing scholars towards their chosen college and career paths. We also understand that schools cannot have a high-quality academic instructional program without a strong school culture and with high behavioral expectations. We will collect and analyze data, use the data to plan and practice, teach and support, and model and monitor the character and high behavioral expectations we want to see in our scholars and families. We will reinforce our school culture expectations with research-based strategies that are scientifically proven to create high-performing schools with innovative practices. Nobly, we will promote a high-quality academic environment and reinforce our mission through our following commitments: Rigorous Curricula, High-Quality Academic Instruction, Inclusion-Classroom Support, and Character Development.

We believe that high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations require the collaboration and commitment of scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members to support overall success. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will foster support that is fairly, firmly and consistently implemented to create a positive learning environment where scholars feel known, loved and respected as humans, first, and psychologically safe to take risks and enjoy learning with their peers. We appreciate your commitment to Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and we will prioritize your scholar's education and future. We are a public charter school, therefore signing these contracts is not required for attendance in our school. We need

to ensure there is clarity on our expectations at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The commitments below outline our school culture and high behavioral expectations to ensure accountability to our mission, mission, and Noble Core Values.

Family Commitments

Attendance & Promotion

1. I commit to supporting Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s high-quality academic instructional model and high behavioral expectations for my scholar's holistic success in school.
2. I commit to my scholar attending school during an extended day and extended school year.
3. I commit to ensuring my scholar arrives at school on time every day, in the proper uniform, for a full day of learning. Please Note: Exceptions are made when your scholar is sick or not able to attend school due to unforeseen family circumstances.

Homework & Academic Support

1. I commit to reviewing and monitoring my scholar's lifework, academic progress, and behavior reports regularly.
2. I commit to ensuring a calm and quiet place for my scholar to complete lifework and read each night.
3. I will sign my scholar's lifework folder and behavior log each night and support them when they need help and encouragement.
4. I commit to communicating and asking questions when I need clarification about my scholar's educational experience.

Behavior & Dress Code

1. I understand my scholar will have consequences and/or loss of privileges if my scholar does not comply with rules and expectations of the school.
2. I understand my scholar's behavior will be managed through the Response to Intervention-Behavior (MTSS-Behavior) process, and an out-of-school suspension may be issued for challenging behaviors outlined in our Discipline Policy.
3. I understand Novus SMART Academy (K-8) works to ensure a safe environment for all scholars and bullying will not be tolerated in any form.
4. I understand my scholar will participate in a character development education program.
5. I commit to ensuring my scholar is fully dressed in the proper school uniform every day.

Family Support & Communication

1. I commit to communicating and working as part of the team to ensure my scholar excels both academically and behaviorally. I will review and sign daily behavior logs, progress reports, report cards, and any correspondence sent home by the school.
2. I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
3. I commit to giving my effort to these commitments, giving my scholar the opportunities they deserve and need.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Scholar Commitments

1. I understand the Noble Core Values and will do my best to always follow them.
2. I commit to attending school every day unless I experience sickness or unforeseen family circumstances.
3. I commit to completing all my assignments with academic excellence, presenting quality work every time.
4. I commit to completing my lifework every night. My lifework will be neat, placed in my lifework folder, and submitted to my teacher every day.
5. I commit to the high behavioral expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and during all school functions, on and off campus.
6. I commit to following the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) uniform policy and dress code.
7. I commit to communicating with my parents/guardians about my progress, including grades, assignments, goals, and behavior.
8. I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
9. I commit to making my best effort to these commitments to give myself the opportunities I deserve and need.

Scholar Print Name: _____

Scholar Signature: _____

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Commitments

High-Quality Academic Instruction

1. We commit to being fully prepared to teach our scholars daily by completing daily prep, anticipating scholar misconceptions, and reviewing data for Tier I, II, III differentiated instruction as needed for Response to Intervention (MTSS-Academics).

2. We commit to continuous professional learning and development, and I desire to constantly refine my practices to provide scholars with a quality education.

Respect

1. We commit to creating a sense of belonging(ness) for every scholar so that they feel known, loved, and respected by their peers and all adults.
2. We commit to teaching and modeling Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Noble Core Values to develop each scholar's character over time. I commit to collaborating with my scholars' families on their progress towards modeling our Noble Core Values.
3. We commit to recognizing and rewarding scholars that are excelling through our program and providing interventions for those experiencing challenges.
4. We commit to providing fair consequences for challenging behaviors as warranted and outlined in our discipline policy.

Communication

1. We commit to communicating with families about our scholars' academic and behavior progress regularly.
2. We commit to returning parent phone calls, emails, and conference requests within 24 hours or next business day following a weekend and/or school break.

Homework (Lifework)

1. We commit to providing daily lifework to reinforce intellectual curiosity.
2. We commit to communicating with families when a scholar needs additional support or fails to complete lifework.

Safety

1. We commit to providing a safe school environment for all scholars. We commit to adhering to ADA compliance and regulations annotated in the Tennessee law regarding public charter schools.
2. We have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
3. We commit to providing a high-quality academic educational experience that ensures all scholars have opportunities for success, regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

Novus Representative Signature: _____

Attendance Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will align its Attendance Policy to the Rutherford County Schools' Attendance Policy. Attendance is a key factor in scholar achievement, and therefore, scholars are expected to be present each day school is in session. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all scholars, parents, teachers, and administrative staff.

The Office Manager or designee shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Alternative program options for scholars who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for scholars applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a scholar with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.

Scholar attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other scholar records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to scholar information without the consent of the scholar or parent/guardian.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the Proposed Executive Director. If an absence is unexcused, the work missed may be made up for credit within five (5) days of returning to school from said absence.

Out-of-school suspension days will be considered unexcused absences and scholars absent for out-of-school suspension shall be allowed to make up the work missed within five (5) days of returning to school from said absence and receive eighty percent (80%) of the grade earned. If a grade was not taken for the day missed, no deduction in grades will occur because of the absence.

Excused Absences

1. Personal Illness/Injury Attendance
    1. A note from the scholar's parent/guardian or legal custodian will be required upon the scholar's return to school. The note should include the reason(s) for and the date(s) of the absence.

    2. The school may accept a written note from a parent/guardian or legal custodian for up to a total of eight (8) accumulated days during the school year for any absence. However, if a scholar is absent more than a total of eight (8) accumulated days, a doctor's note specifying dates for illness must be submitted for any subsequent absences due to illness to be excused.
2. Illness of Immediate Family Member
    1. A doctor's statement is required after three (3) days. An immediate family member is defined as a scholar's parent/guardian or sibling.
3. Death in the Family
    1. One day shall be excused for the death of family members. Additional days will be excused at the discretion of the principal.
    2. If the death is not of a family member, the principal may approve as an unexcused absence with appropriate documentation.
4. Extreme Weather Conditions: If there are extreme weather conditions, such as, but not limited to, snow, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow the direction of Rutherford County Schools' cancellation policy. We will also make announcements of closures on social media, local television and radio stations, and on our school website.
5. Religious Observances
6. Military Service of Parent/Guardian
    1. School principals shall provide scholars with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment of and a one-day excused absence upon the return of a parent/guardian or immediate family member serving active military service.
    2. Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for scholars to visit a parent/guardian during a deployment cycle. The scholar shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Scholars shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during these absences.
7. Pregnancy
8. School-Endorsed Activities
9. Summons, Subpoena, or Court Order
    1. Written verification of the appearance and the time involved must be submitted upon the scholar's return to school. These excuses may be obtained through the Court Clerk's office.
10. Non-School-Sponsored Extracurricular Activities 39
    1. Documentation of the scholar's participation in the non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities must be submitted;
    2. The scholar's parent/guardian submits to the principal a written request for the excused absence no later than seven (7) business days prior to the scholar's absence.
    3. The principal, in writing, approves the scholar's excused absence.
    4. The principal may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities for which excused absences may be granted to a scholar during the school year.
    5. The principal shall excuse no more than ten (10) absences each school year for scholars participating in non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities.
11. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the scholar has no control.

The Office Manager shall be responsible for ensuring the following:
1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate scholars present or absent for the majority of the day;
3. All scholar absences are verified;
4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

Unexcused Absences & Truancy. Any scholar absent from school outside of the reasons outlined above will receive an unexcused absence. If a scholar has excessive unexcused absences he/she will be flagged for truancy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow Tennessee State Law (TCA 49-6-3007) when reporting truancy.

Annually, the Proposed Executive Director or designee will provide written notice to the family that attendance at school is required. Scholars shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day to be counted present. Scholars receiving special education services may attend part time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes. If a scholar is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the families and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.

Scholars who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Proposed Executive Director or designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the families of the scholar's absence. If a family does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences or request an attendance hearing, then the Proposed Executive Director or designee shall implement tier two of the progressive truancy plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court. The Proposed Executive Director or designee shall develop appropriate administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan	
Tier I	Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all scholars at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. These supports shall include, but are not limited to, sharing of expectations online and in the Scholar-Family Handbook, communicating tardies and absences to families daily, providing transportation, and sharing community resources such as before and after-school care options.
Tier II	Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the scholar accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court, and includes the following: 1. A conference with the scholar and the scholar's family; 2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the scholar, the family, and the Attendance Proposed Executive Director or designee. The contract shall include: 1. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the scholar; 2. The period for which the contract is effective; and 3. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court. 3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the scholar's progress; and 4. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a scholar has been absent from school. The employee may refer the scholar to counseling, community based services, or other services to address the scholar's attendance problems.
Tier III	Tier III shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful. Tier III may consist of the following interventions, to be determined by the Proposed Executive Director or designee as needed: 1. Utilizing truancy officers, peer mentors, social workers, or other appropriate staff to encourage consistent attendance, and/or 2. Meet with families to ascertain needs and hindrances to attendance, offering recommendations for community resources such as before and after school care, and/or discuss transportation needs and assist with problem-solving those needs. The interventions shall address scholars' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Proposed Executive Director or designee.

Make-up Work. Any scholar issued an excused absence may have the opportunity to make up any missed schoolwork. All scholars will be expected to make-up work to receive credit for missed classwork within 10 days of the initial missed absence. Any missed work not made up during this time period may negatively impact a scholar's class grade. Scholars will be provided extra support on missed work during extracurricular time, recess, and choice time until the work is made up. For unexcused absences, students may have one day of makeup work time to complete missed assignments for each day missed for up to 5 days. If absences exceed 10 days, the family must attend a meeting with the Proposed Executive Director or designee to determine a plan for make-up work and support for the student to be on track for the rest of the academic year.

Perfect Attendance. To be eligible for perfect attendance, a scholar must be in attendance for a length of time equal to the state's minimum hourly requirement for a school day. To have perfect attendance in a particular class, a scholar must be present every day for over half of the class period. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of observance of a day set aside as sacred by a religious denomination of which the scholar is a member or adherent, shall be deemed to have met the requirements of perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to such observance. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of a scheduled visit to a college or university shall be deemed to have met the requirements of perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to such visit. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of earning an exemption from exams shall be deemed to have met the requirements for perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to the exemptions.

Positive Incentives for Perfect Attendance. Our goal is to maintain a 95% attendance rate or better throughout the school year and across all years. To support high attendance, we will provide incentives to individual scholars and to classes on each grade level. We will highlight individual scholars by recognizing them during our Friday Celebrations at Nobel Fest for weekly perfect attendance. We will highlight the class with the best monthly attendance rate at our Noble Fest at the end of each month. Each quarter, we will celebrate scholars with perfect attendance during our quarterly honors programs. Our Noble Fest occurs at the culmination of each school week, but we reserve the last Noble Fest of each quarter for members of our community to join us in celebrating our scholars and parents for meeting and exceeding our expectations in partnership.

Tardies. Being on time to school and class is essential for optimum teaching and learning. When a scholar is tardy, he/she disrupts this process for others and loses important learning time for himself/herself. School bus transportation will be provided free of charge to scholars of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). For this reason, tardies related to car problems, traffic, oversleeping, etc. are not valid reasons for tardiness. To receive an excused tardy when late to school, the scholar must either:

1. Have a doctor's statement;
2. An official court notice; or
3. Receive a parent conference or a parent's telephone call and approval by the administration. Personal illness would be excused.

Early Dismissal. Families must call the school in advance and provide a written notice to the school to explain the early dismissal. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) discourages early dismissal unless there are extenuating circumstances. The family must sign out the scholar in the main office with the Office Manager before removing the scholar from the school. The school will document early dismissals as absent if the student is present for less than 3 1⁄2 hours of instructional time on any given day.

Attendance Hearings. Scholars with excessive (more than 5) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the Proposed Executive Director or designee. If the scholar chooses to appeal, the scholar or his/her family shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or to determine if the scholar has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Proposed Executive Director or designee and the family of the scholar of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parents/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Proposed Executive Director or designee. The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Proposed Executive Director/designee rendering a decision, the scholar's family may request a hearing by the board, and the board shall review the record. Following the review, the board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Proposed Executive Director or designee. The action of the board shall be final.

State-Mandated Assessments. Scholars who are absent the day of their scheduled TNReady assessments must present a signed doctor's excuse or must have been given an excused release by the Proposed Executive Director or designee prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Scholars who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused scholars will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam which shall be averaged into their final grade.

Health

When a scholar becomes ill during school hours or is ill during the school day and not able to stay in class, families will be called to pick up the scholar for early dismissal. Therefore, accurate emergency contact information is needed on file for adequate communication. If a scholar needs to take any prescription medicine the family must obtain the appropriate documentation from the medical provider, giving the school nurse or designee permission to administer the medicine to the scholar. If at any time during the school year the scholar contracts one of the following infectious diseases, please seek medical attention and avoid bringing the child to school: flu, chickenpox, conjunctivitis, strep throat, lice, stomach flu/virus, ringworm.

Family Engagement

In alignment to our Scholar-Family-School Commitments & Accountability signed by scholars and families, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) expects our families to participate in their scholars' learning throughout the school year in the following ways, but not limited to: Noble Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning. Throughout the year, we will host activities to engage our scholars and families in our community such as Community Circle, service-learning projects and community service, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and Goodies for Grandparent's Day.

Lifework (Homework)

Lifework is an essential component of our high-quality academic program. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will assign homework Monday through Thursday, with opportunities to extend learning over the weekend as needed. We believe it is essential for families to review their scholars' lifework every night. Lifework includes 15 minutes of required reading every night, and all scholars will be given a lifework academic folder that includes the work they need to complete as well as a daily reading log. If lifework is consistently late, missing, incomplete, or poor in quality, the scholar's family will be notified.

Progress Reports, Report Cards, & Scholar-led Conferences

Teachers and staff members will use daily Noble progress reports and report cards to communicate scholars' academic and behavioral performance. Report cards will be picked up by families during our report card pick up days throughout the year. This will give teachers an opportunity to schedule required conferences with families whose scholars are failing classes or having challenges with behavior to discuss support. Our scholars will also engage in scholar-led conferences where they will

present their own data to their accountability team (i.e., teachers, parents, and one other person of their choice) to support their learning and development over time.

Promotion Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s promotion policy is rooted in a balance of understanding that while scholars learn at different rates and may experience plateaus at different times as they grow, mastery of grade level academic standards is the best measure for promotion to the next grade level. It ensures that a scholar can be successful in the academic challenges of the next grade level. Grade-level promotion is determined based on attendance, scholar mastery of content as depicted in final grades, and final exam requirements. Additionally, we consider the whole-child and may retain scholars who demonstrate significantly below grade level social development. Denial determinations may include scholar attendance; however, scholar attendance may not be the sole criterion. If attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. The scholar and the parent/guardian shall be advised if the scholar is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism.
2. Procedures in due process are available to the scholar when credit or promotion is denied.

Special Education

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) believes in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all scholars. FAPE mandates that the school provides access to general education and specialized educational services. A student may receive special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedures. Family involvement in this procedure is required. A family who believes their scholar may have a disability that interferes substantially with their ability to function properly in school should contact the Proposed Executive Director or designee.

School Culture

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement an approach to discipline that promotes restorative practices that empower scholars to move past their mistakes to make better decisions in the future. There will be times when challenging behaviors are addressed with disciplinary actions; however, we will fairly, firmly, and consistently use the MTSS-Behavior framework as a proactive approach to prevent scholars' challenging behaviors through data-driven planning and intervention practices that support their needs. We will use Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) to support scholars in their understanding of their lagging skills and to reduce their challenging behaviors, activating their voice and choice through Plan B conversations that lead to restoration and overall scholar success. Our MTSS-Behavior framework will provide space for grace with accountability while leveraging the support of teachers, school leaders and staff members to support scholars objectively over time without judgment.

PowerSchool. PowerSchool is an online platform that we will use to document and communicate scholar's positive and challenging behaviors for grades K-8. We will use data collected to inform our MTSS-Behavior Framework.

Practices to Promote Good Discipline, including Penalties and Incentives. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide Tier I high behavioral expectations and support for all scholars. Our teachers and school leaders will consistently use the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for classroom management to support with school culture as follows:

Get Better Faster Scope & Sequence: Management Trajectory	
Phase 1: Summer Professional Development & Learning to Develop Essential Routines & Procedures	
What	**How**
Routines & Procedures 101 Design and roll out… • Plan and practice critical routines and procedures moment-by moment. • Plan and practice the roll out: how to introduce routine for the first time.	• Explain what each routine means and what it will look like. • Write out what teachers and scholars do at each step, and what will happen with the scholars who do not get it right at first.
	• Plan the "I Do": how you will model the routine. • Plan the practice and what you will do when scholars don't get it right the first time.
Confident Presence: Stand and speak with purpose.	• Confident Stance: When giving instructions, stop moving, and strike a formal pose.

	• Warm-Demander Register: When giving directions, use a warm but firm register, including tone and word choice.
Phase 2: Roll Out & Monitor Routines & Build Trust & Rapport	
What	**How**
What to Do: Use the economy of language when giving directions.	• Chunk your directions by giving them one-by-one in a sequential order. • Make them bite-sized (e.g., 3-5 words) and observable. • Check for understanding of complex instructions.

See Your Scholars: Know when scholars are engaged or unengaged.	• Make eye contact by looking at all scholars for on-task engagement. Choose 3-4 focus areas (Places where you have scholars often off task) to look towards consistently.
	• Circulate the room with purpose (break the plane).
	  ○ Move along the desks and around the perimeter.
	  ○ Stand at the corners by identifying 3 spots on the perimeter of the room to which you can circulate to stand and monitor scholar work.
	  ○ Move away from the scholar who is speaking to monitor the whole room.

Routines & Procedures 201: Revise and perfect them.	• Revise any routine that needs more attention to detail or is inefficient, emphasizing what scholars and teachers are doing at each moment. • Do it again by having scholars do the same routine again if initially incorrect.
Build Trust & Rapport: Narrate the Positive	• Warm welcome by making eye contact, smiling, and greeting scholars. • Narrate what scholars do well, not what they do wrong. • “Table two is ready. Their books are open and all are reading.” • “I like how Javon has anticipated a counter-argument to strengthen his thesis”. • Praise intellect, not just behavior and reinforce scholars getting smarter. • Affirm the effort, not just the outcome: “Your diligence on revising your thesis really paid off here”. • When narrating the positive, look at scholars who are off task.
Build Trust & Rapport: Make Authentic Connections	• Memorize scholar names and use them each time you call on them. • Make a self-to-scholar connection when they share a struggle, interest, or passion: “I struggled when…” or “I love that, too!” • Show genuine concern by keeping a tracker or important details and dates for each scholar to follow up with them; checking in with them after class when something is off.
Phase 3: Engage Every Scholar	
What	**How**

Whole-Class Reset	• Implement a planned whole-class reset to reestablish scholar expectations when a class routine has slowly weakened over previous classes.
	  ○ “I’ve noticed that only 40% of us are writing endnotes. These are important because they demonstrate your understanding of the text. Today I’ll be looking for endnotes in all your annotations”.
	• Implement an “in-the-moment reset” when a class veers off task during the class period.
	  ○ Example: Stop teaching. Confident stance. Clear What-to-Do: “Pencil down. Eyes on me in 3-2-1. Thank you. That’s what Harvard looks like”. Pick up tone and energy again.

Engage All Scholars: Make sure all scholars participate.	• Cold call by recording which scholars participate in each class; cold call those scholars who do not to ensure everyone participates.
	• Pre-call/warm call by letting a scholar who needs more time know you are calling their person next.
	• Turn-and-talk by implementing briefly (15-60 seconds) and frequently.
	• Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion by cold calling, all hands, and turn-and-talks.
	• Provided support to scholars with pre-identified needs.
	  ○ Executive Functioning (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer).
	  ○ Social Support (e.g., communication strategies, strategies for resolving conflict).
	  ○ Stress (e.g., strategies for naming and managing).

Individual Scholar Corrections	• Anticipate unengaged scholar behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect scholar using the least invasive intervention necessary:
	  ○ Proximity
	  ○ Eye Contact
	  ○ Use a Non-Verbal
	  ○ Say scholar's Name Quickly
	  ○ Small Consequence
	• Engage in "close the loop" conversations with scholars to process what happened and improve for next time.

Phase 4: Increase the Momentum of the Classroom	
What	**How**
Build the Momentum	• Give the scholars a simple challenge to complete a task. ○ Example: "Now I know you're only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master"! • Warm Energy: Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, and smile.
Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that scholars feel constantly engaged.	• Use a hand-held timer to stick to the time stamps in the lesson and give scholars an audio cue that it is time to move on. • Increase the rate of questioning no more than two seconds between when a scholar responds and a teacher picks back up instruction. • Use countdowns to work the clock: "Do that in 5, 4, 3, 2,1". • Use call and response for keywords.

Engaged Small Group Work: Maximize the learning for every scholar during group work.	• Deliver explicit step-by-step instructions for group work.
	  ○ Make the group tasks visible/easily observable (e.g., a handout to fill in, notes to take, product to build, etc.).
	  ○ Create a role for every person (with each group no larger than the number of roles needed to accomplish the tasks at hand).
	  ○ Give timed instructions, with benchmarks for where the group should be after each time window.
	• Monitor the visual evidence of group progress.
	  ○ Check in on each group every 5-10 minutes to monitor progress.
	• Verbally enforce individual and group accountability.
	  ○ "You are five minutes behind; get back on track".
	  ○ "Lorena: focus".

Stretch It: Next Steps	
What	**How**
Keep it up!	Once you get this far, you can focus nearly entirely on rigor and deepening your content knowledge.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain the sacredness of high-quality academic instruction through consistently implementing our school culture and high behavioral expectations, and proactively responding to the challenging behaviors of scholars immediately. We have modeled our school culture and high behavioral expectations after the schoolwide discipline plans from BES schools such as Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee; Power Center Academy Middle School-Hickory Hill in Memphis, Tennessee; and Purpose Preparatory Academy in Nashville, Tennessee.

We believe that a common system of rules and consequences consistently and fairly enforced by all teachers, school leaders, and staff members to maximize student time on task and overall academic achievement. The following chart displays our behavior management system for our Lower School (grades K-4).

Behavior Management System Description & Consequences

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use a physical clip chart in grades K-4 so that scholars can visually track their own behavior daily as teachers and school leaders provide clear What-to-Do directions, redirections, and consequences. Our behavior system is color-coded as follows:

Blue	Noble Behavior w/ No Redirections (0) Scholar demonstrates exemplary Noble Core Values in their actions, language and/or behaviors.
Green	Low-to-No Redirections (1-3) Scholar consistently demonstrates Noble Core Values during the instructional day.
Yellow	Moderate Redirections (4-6) The teacher has given an official warning to the scholar as a reminder of not meeting high behavioral expectations in the classroom. Consequently, the scholar's clip is moved to yellow on the clip chart.
Orange	Recurring Redirections & Recorded in PowerSchool (7-9) The scholar has received two warnings and needs to be temporarily separated from teammates to reset or to cool down in the classroom. Classroom cooldowns will not take more than five (5) minutes. While scholars are cooling down, they will sit in a designated area in the classroom and are expected to sit in the chair, lace their fingers, and sit silently until the teacher calls them back to rejoin the class.
Red	Recurring Redirections & Challenging Behaviors, Teacher-Scholar Conferences, Call Hone, Recorded in PowerSchool (10 or more) Scholar has demonstrated ongoing challenging behaviors and failed to get back on track independently. Scholar automatically moves to red when displaying a severe challenging misbehavior related to physical or verbal aggression. The scholar will be removed from class and required to conference with either the Proposed Executive Director or designee. These Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) conferences are quick, direct and followed by an immediate call home. This may result in future loss of privilege, such as, but not limited to, attending Noble Fest, going on a field trip, and/or other school-based incentives.
Grey	Scholar removed from class at least two times and the challenging behavior continues to be significantly disruptive to the learning environment. The Proposed Executive Director or designee will contact a family member to pick up the scholar from the school or to complete work separate from the classroom with a designated staff member.

Daily Behavior Logs	Noble Reports are sent home daily in scholars' take-home folders, identifying each scholars' color for behavior in the morning and after lunch, and any additional notes from the teacher concerning challenging behaviors. Parents are required to sign reports and can write messages back to the teacher.
Reinforced Positive Behaviors	Our goal is to build habits of character and help scholars achieve success through positive behaviors. We will use positive narrations, public praise and recognition, and formal awards- such as Novus Nobles of the Week and Novus Nobles of the Month- to highlight scholars during our weekly Noble Fest on Fridays, where we will also praise college cohorts for reaching team goals tied to academics, classroom culture, attendance and completion rates during blended learning.

Incentives. When scholars model positive behaviors that align to our high behavioral expectations and Noble Core Values, they will receive incentives. The first incentive that scholars can earn is being moved up a color on the behavior clip chart. We will also provide weekly rewards and incentives on Fridays in preparation for Noble Fest as follows:

- After two days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker.

- After three days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker and will be celebrated at Nobel Fest.
- After four days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, and pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures.
    - Scholars who are Blue or Green at least four days in one week will have the opportunity to be named the scholar of the week in their college cohorts.
    - The scholar of the week will receive a certificate and a free book of their choice to be presented during advisory time on Fridays.
    - Scholars of the week are automatically eligible to be named the scholar of the month as determined by academics, attendance and behavior.
- After five days in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures, and receive a special snack from our mobile desert cart.

We will recognize each grade-level scholar of the month by hanging their pictures outside of their classroom doors and on the main entrance bulletin board for the next month in celebration of their demonstration of our Noble Core Values and high behavioral expectations.

Our scholars in grades 5-8 have a separate high behavioral expectations system that includes the tracking of our Noble Core Values and minor/major infractions tied to challenging behaviors. These behaviors, whether positive or challenging, are logged in our PowerSchool system as follows:

Modeling High Behavioral Expectations	
Noble Core Value	**Example**
Academic Excellence (+15)	• Taking skills learned to make future decisions that lead to success; capable of anything. • Relentlessly driven to succeed in pursuit of colleges and careers and beyond. • Academic honesty (exceeding school and/or classroom expectations). • Writing in college sentences when not specified in the directions. • Finding the third way to understand a skill (even when hard). • Embracing new ideas and/or challenging work. • Remaining on task throughout the class. • Taking notes in class when not required. • Thoroughness (redoing an assignment because you know you can do better).
Beacon of Joy (+15)	• Supporting others as a partner in pursuit of success. • Finding space in the world by tapping into joy to spread it to others. • Acts of courageous behavior. • Noticing effort or growth in a classmate and encouraging them/shouting them out.
Character Development (+15)	• Self-aware and understand how actions impact others. • Giving and receiving constructive feedback that helps self and others to learn and grow together. • Unafraid to fail, but learning how to succeed moving forward. • Willing and eager to say the right answer after previously giving a wrong answer. • Owning a mistake without being asked to own it and offering an apology without blaming others. • Organization of personal belongings and/or space. • Demonstration of self-control. • Telling the truth, even if it means someone will get the consequence. • Doing the right things when nobody is watching. • Responding quickly and appropriately to redirection.
Habits for Humanity (+15)	• Using creative talents to support the needs of others.

	• Breaking free from limiting beliefs to change the game for self and others. • Displaying positive leadership. • Establishing integrity among peers. • Providing group and individual support to classmates as needed. • Getting homework from another scholar because they left theirs at school.
Intellectual Curiosity (+15)	• Using curiosity to discover and pursue new knowledge. • Asking questions and using prior knowledge to develop my own solutions. • Asking for help or asking clarifying questions in class when others seem to understand the lesson/concept.
Minor Infractions	
Challenging Behavior	**Example**
Talking (-5)	• Talking out of turn. • Inappropriate volume. • Making inappropriate noises.
Off Task (-5)	• Reading a book instead of focusing during the lesson. • Drawing on paper. • Dozing off. • Passing notes. • Working on non-related work.
Disruptive (-5)	• Kicking the table or chair. • Making any unnecessary noises in class or at whole school events. • Pencil tapping, drumming, singing/rapping in class. • Slamming book or door.
Organization/Unprepared (-5)	• Not having class materials (writing utensil, notebook, packet, etc.). • Does not have an agenda. • Being late to class without a pass (give the mark but keep the scholar in class. Do not send them to get a pass).
Major Infractions	
Challenging Behavior & Rationale	**Example**
Disrespect to Adults (-15): All teachers, school leaders and staff members have the right to speak and redirect scholars throughout the building. Interactions between scholars and adults should always be positive and promoting; however, the adult must always remain emotionally constant when handling challenging behaviors.	• Talking back or yelling at or to an adult. • Cursing at an adult. • Walking away from an adult. • Inappropriate physical actions toward an adult (may warrant a suspension).
Failure to Comply (-15): It is important that all scholars meet the expectations of teachers, school leaders, and staff members daily. When scholars do not meet expectations, it impacts the culture of the learning environment and takes the focus off learning. Teachers cannot allow scholars to undermine their authority as the leader of the classroom.	• Shouting out. • Slow response to directions. • Non-compliance with transition procedures. • Sleeping in class. • Prohibited use of technology (may lead to loss of technology use based on the nature of the offense).
Inappropriate Response (-15): It is important that scholars advocate for themselves. However, there	• Rolling Eyes • Smacking Lips

are appropriate ways to disagree with someone that fosters discussion and growth. When responding, we want to help scholars become aware of those responses that are disrespectful and hinder a growth conversation.	• Speaking back in a raised voice. • Sucking Teeth
Unprofessional (-15): Dressing for success is important to help us cut down on the amount of distractions that take away from learning time. We all have a uniform we wear that shows that we are present and ready to work. In addition to looking professional, there are duties that come along with the "job." We are trying to build in the habit of accountability to major duties for our scholars.	• Combing/Braiding Hair in Class • Writing on body or uniform. • Putting on Makeup in Class • Shirt Untucked (out of uniform generally) • Sleeping in class after reminders to stand or walk around. • Chewing gum, eating in class, etc. • Horseplaying or Throwing Objects • Failure to turn in progress reports or other signed forms. • Phone rings in class. • On the wrong website, or inappropriate use of school materials.
Disrespect to Community (-15): As a school, we are fostering a culture of respect. Respect for each other and respect for learning must be paramount. We do not allow disrespect and take it very seriously because we want all scholars and staff members to work in a safe environment.	• Classroom Disruption • Cafeteria Disruption • Inappropriate body language. • Calling someone a negative name. • Pushing/kicking/hitting someone. • Use of profanity. • Seeking a different answer (one teacher says no, you ask another teacher). • Writing on school property. • Refusing to respond to a staff member. • Inappropriate use of technology. • Disrespect toward peers/adults. • Copying work/cheating on classwork, test, or quiz. • Refusing to follow a specific direction. • Walking away from a staff member. • Skipping others in line for breakfast or lunch.
Out of Area (-15): It is our responsibility to keep our scholars safe. Therefore, it is important that we know where scholars are at all times. This helps our scholars learn responsibility and communication skills.	• Skipping class: 15 minutes or later arrival to class without a note. • In the hallway during class without a pass (paper or digital). • Being anywhere in the building without permission.
6 Minor Infractions -5 (Automatic Detention)	**2 Major Infractions -15 (Automatic Detention)**
Distractions (D)	**Disrespect to Adults (DA)**
• Purposefully Being Loud • Purposefully Yawning/Burping • Any Inappropriate Noises	• Talking Back / Yelling at an Adult • Cursing Out an Adult • Walking away from an Adult
Talking (T)	**Disrespect to Community (DC)**
• Talking Out of Turn • Talking During Test • Excessive Volume	• Horseplaying • Disrupting Class Deliberately • Vandalizing School Property
Off Task (OT)	**Inappropriate Response (IR)**
• Not Following Directions • Disengaged • Misusing Resources	• Arguing • Sucking Teeth • Disrespectful Tone
Organization/Unprepared (O/U)	**Unprofessional (UP)**

• Unprepared, Unorganized • Out of Uniform • Late to Class	• Combing/Braiding Hair or Putting on Makeup • Sleeping in Class • Phone Rings in Class or on Inappropriate Website
	Failure to Comply (FC)
	• Slow Response to Directions • Repeatedly Not Following Directions • Not Completing Homework
	Out of Area (OA)
	• Skipping Class • In Hall Without Hall Pass • Being Anywhere in the Building Without Permission

Suspensions & Expulsion Procedures

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will carry out the discipline policy adopted by the Board of Directors post-authorization to govern the discipline procedures used with all scholars. Our discipline policy defines suspensions and expulsions in the following ways:

Suspensions. The option to suspend a scholar will be considered when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. A suspension is defined as any time a scholar is required to be removed from the instructional learning environment and not in attendance at school due to the display of challenging behaviors. To sustain a positive school culture and high behavioral expectations where everyone is known, loved and respected, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will suspend scholars from our school when there are breaches to our school Code of Conduct and high behavioral expectations. A scholar may be suspended by decision of the Proposed Executive Director (Years 1-5), and when the school is at full scale, by the School Principal in collaboration with Assistant Principals. The Board of Directors will receive notice of all suspensions data during our state-of-the-school data snapshots presented at monthly board meetings. Families will be notified immediately when a scholar has been issued an in-school suspension and/or an out-of-school suspension. After the scholar serves the out-of-school suspension, the scholar and family will be required to attend a scheduled school reentry meeting to continue collaboration and support with restorative practices that will set the scholars up for success as they return to the school environment. Key stakeholders, such as the Proposed Executive Director (replaced by the School Principal as hired), and Assistant Principals will attend school reentry meetings to ensure that everyone, including the scholar, is aligned with the high behavioral expectations moving forward.

We will also create a school environment that meets the needs of all scholars and their rights, especially for our scholars who receive prescribed services with an IEP, ILP, 504 Plan, tiered systems of support, and/or any other plans designed to support scholars where they are. We will implement the MTSS-Behavior framework to evaluate scholars' trends in challenging behavior and the impact it has on their academic progress.

Expulsions. The option to expel a scholar will always be our last resort when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. Expulsions are the result of teachers and school leaders collaborating with scholars and families, and service providers, exhausting all efforts that the scholar has not responded to, such as but not limited to parental involvement, advisory support, school counseling, behavior improvement plans (BIP), Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), detentions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school- suspensions. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to expel a scholar whose challenging behaviors constitute endangerment to self, other scholars, and/or staff members. There is zero tolerance for the possession and/or use of a gun or deadly weapon on our school campus, which could harm scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members. We also reserve the right to expel a scholar for the possession, use of, and/or selling of alcohol or controlled substances of any kind while on the school campus. Scholars who have demonstrated challenging behaviors and/or open defiance towards authority that have led to multiple suspensions over time are also at risk of expulsion.

For a scholar to be expelled, the process must be initiated by the Proposed Executive Director to include discussions with the entire faculty, with a scheduled hearing to follow with the scholar and family. A scholar who is expelled will receive due process under Tennessee state law. At Novus SMART Academy (K-8), due process will include the following statement that is subject to legal review and the Board of Directors' approval: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) follows standard disciplinary policies and procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures. If the Proposed Executive Director believes expulsion is warranted, the scholar will be expelled. The Proposed Executive Director will also report any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons as outlined in TCA 39-17-1309 to the La Vergne and/or Smyrna Police Departments. Any decision to expel a

scholar will require the Board of Directors' approval, and families may, first, appeal the decision to the Proposed Executive Director before filing a grievance with the Board of Directors.

Appeals Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. Families reserve the right to appeal suspensions and/or expulsions within ten school days by submitting an appeals letter to the Proposed Executive Director of the school. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the following procedure as a guide for families to appeal in the most effective manner:

1. The Proposed Executive Director sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the appeal submission.
2. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
3. After listening to the appeal, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. Although there is an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Grievance Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. If families are still dissatisfied with the results of the appeal process with the Proposed Executive Director, they reserve the right to submit a grievance letter to the Board of Directors within ten days after meeting with the Proposed Executive Director and the Assistant Principal.

1. The Board Chair sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the grievance submission.
2. Members of the Board of Directors, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
3. After listening to the grievances of families, the Board Chair along with members of the Board of Directors present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. The Board of Directors is also able to ask clarifying questions that both the families and the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal can answer.
4. After the grievance hearing, the Board Chair lets families know that although there was an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.
5. Within 24 hours, families are notified by the Proposed Executive Director about the decision of the Board of Directors, whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Code of Conduct

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will align its Code of Conduct to the Rutherford County Schools' Code of Conduct related to challenging behaviors, disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary options. Our school culture and high behavioral expectations will include restorative practices that allow scholars to contribute voice and choice through Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), and we will incentivize scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members for modeling our Noble Core Values. This will happen by not lowering the bar of excellence, but by defending the bar of excellence with high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations for all scholars. High behavioral expectations for all scholars means dismantling marginalized practices and replacing them, first, with the belief that all scholars can and will achieve success holistically with the appropriate support systems in place. We will reinforce our high behavioral expectations for every scholar and include structured opportunities to reinforce the desired outcomes we expect through their actions. Teachers and school leaders will practice emotional constancy in the spirit of being fair, firm and consistent, and to deliver consequences with minimal distractions to the sacredness of instructional time. To that end, redirecting challenging behaviors and/or delivering a consequence should not antagonize or embarrass scholars, regardless of the circumstances.

Our approach to school culture and high behavioral expectations will be included in our Scholar-Family Handbook, and translated for families in their home language. We have five levels for disciplinary procedures and options based on challenging behaviors that scholars may demonstrate in violation of our school culture and behavior system and follows (aligned to Rutherford County Schools Code of Conduct):

Level I Challenging Behaviors

This level includes minor challenging behaviors on the part of the scholar which impedes orderly classroom guidelines or interferes with the orderly operation of the school, but which can usually be handled by an individual teacher, school leader or staff member.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Classroom disturbances • Classroom tardiness • Cheating and lying • Abusive language • Failure to do assignments or carry out directions	• The staff member intervenes immediately. • The staff member determines what offense was	• Verbal reprimand • Special assignment • Restricting activities • Counseling • Withdrawal of privileges • Issuance of demerits

• Wearing, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment • Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)	committed and its severity. • The staff member determines who committed the offense and if he/she understands the nature of the offense. • The staff member employs appropriate disciplinary options. • The record of the offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the staff member.	• Strict supervised study • Detention • In-school suspension • Community service • Reteaching of expectations • Restorative practices • Behavior contract • Mediation • Mentoring
Level II Challenging Behaviors This level includes challenging behaviors whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These behaviors do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but have educational consequences serious enough to require corrective action on the part of the school leadership team.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**
• Continuation of unmodified Level I challenging behaviors • School or class tardiness • School or class truancy • Using forged notes or excuses • Disruptive classroom behavior • Possession of a personal communication device when not authorized, if not drug related • Victimization of any scholar (hara	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation made by the staff member and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the staff member of the action. • The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	• Teacher/schedule change • Mediation • Modified probation • Behavior modification programs • Peer counseling • Referral to outside agency • Transfer • Detention • Suspension from school-sponsored activities or from riding school bus • In-school suspension • Out-of-school suspension • Referral for MTSS-Behavior • Revision • Reteaching of expectations • Referral to Tier 2 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service
Level III Challenging Behaviors This level includes acts directly against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**

• Continuation of unmodified Level I and II challenging behaviors • Fighting • Vandalism (minor) • Use, possession, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or a non-THC vape product • Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia • Stealing • Threats to others (including staff) • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Elopement from classroom/school building • Possession of fireworks not deemed an explosive by law enforcement	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal may refer the incident to the Proposed Executive Director and make recommendations for consequences. • If the scholar's program is to be changed, adequate notice shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) of the charges against him, his/her right to appear at a hearing, and his/her right to be represented by a person of his/her choosing. • Any change in school assignment is appealable to the Board. • The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	• In-school suspension • Detention • Restitution from loss, damage, or stolen property • Out-of-school suspension • Social adjustment classes • Transfer • Referral to Tier 2 or 3 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service • Development of a safety plan

Level IV Challenging Behaviors

This level of challenging behaviors include acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are so serious that they usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the scholar from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board of Directors. If a scholar's action poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, a teacher, school leader, or staff member may use reasonable force when necessary to prevent bodily harm or death to another person.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Continuation of unmodified Level I, II, and III behaviors • Death threats • Extortion • Vandalism • Theft/possession/sale of stolen property • Arson	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar. • The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar	• Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement • Long term out-of-school suspension

• Sexual misconduct not resulting in a charge deemed a zero tolerance in Policy 6.309. • Marketing/Possession/distribution/sale/transfer of any substance which is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size or markings to a controlled substance • Possession/use/sale/transfer of alcoholic beverages • Possession/distribution of any drug paraphernalia • Use/transfer of unauthorized substances • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Off-campus criminal behavior that results in the scholar being legally charged and/or convicted with a felony or with what would have been a felony if the scholar were an adult, and the scholar's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or disrupts the educational process.	the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified. • Law enforcement officials are contacted. • The incident is reported, and recommendations are made to the Proposed Executive Director. • If the scholar's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.	• Expulsion up to one (1) year • Alternative schools • Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement

Level V Challenging Behaviors

The below offenses have been deemed zero tolerance offenses under state law and by Rutherford County Schools Board Policy. Except offenses deemed reasoned judgment offenses, notated with an asterisk, the below offenses shall result in an expulsion for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year, subject to modification by the Proposed Executive Director on a case-by-case basis. Reasoned judgment offenses allow the principal to take into consideration intent and other factors to determine the appropriate level of discipline.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Unlawfully using or being under the influence of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Possessing unlawfully any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Sale/distribution/transfer of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Possession of a firearm. • Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer. • Aggravated assault • Bomb threat • Threat of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity. • Possession of substances or devices deemed to be explosives by law enforcement • scholars charged with committing an on-campus violent felony listed in Board Policy 6.309 • Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons other than firearms.*	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar. • The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified. • Law enforcement officials are contacted. • The incident is reported, and recommendations are made to the Proposed Executive Director. • If the scholar's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.	• For zero tolerance offenses, expulsion for no less than one (1) year. Scholars may make applications for modification to the Proposed Executive Director. • For reasoned judgment offenses marked with an asterisk: ○ Suspension ○ Remandment ○ Expulsion up to one (1) year, with ability to apply for modification.

• Possession/use/transfer of other instruments and substances with the intent to do harm to self or others or in a manner that renders the item dangerous.*		

Additional Guidelines

1. A principal shall not impose successive short-term suspensions that cumulatively exceed ten (10) days for the same offense.
2. A teacher or other school official shall not reduce or authorize the reduction of a scholar's grade because of discipline problems except in deportment or citizenship.
3. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on absences except as provided by Board Policy.
4. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on failure to…
5. Pay any activity fee;
    a. Pay a library or other school fine;
    b. Make restitution for lost or damaged school property.

Protecting the Rights of Scholars with Disabilities

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will fully support scholars with disabilities who struggle with challenging behaviors. Our support model is collaborative and inclusive of families in partnership with related services providers offered by the school as a continuum of services, and in some cases, professional services that have been solicited by families. As part of the individualized education plan (IEP) process, the IEP team will create a behavior intervention plan (BIP) driven by the results of the functional behavior assessment (FBA) as an intervention to address the challenging behaviors moving forward. The BIP will explicitly outline rewards and consequences the scholar will receive, and next steps to address new or recurring challenging behaviors should they surface**.** In the event a scholar with disabilities receives at least ten days of out-of-school suspension, the IEP team will meet to facilitate a manifestation determination review (MDR) to determine whether the behavior in question is a direct result of the scholar's disability. If it is determined that the behavior in question is a direct result of the scholar's disability, the IEP team will review the current IEP to determine next steps regarding additional support and services needed. If it is determined that the behavior in question is not a direct result of the scholar's disability, then the scholar may be disciplined in a manner that is comparable to a scholar who receives general education services.

Parent Participation. In accordance with the Rules of State Board of Education for Special Education Programs and Services, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will notify the families of scholars with a disability at least ten days before an IEP meeting to ensure that they have an opportunity to attend. MDR meetings will be held after a 24-hour notice has been issued to families as mandated in the Tennessee Rules of State Board of Education for parent participation (0520-01-09.15). When a scholar with disabilities returns to school, the services prescribed in the BIP based on the MDR will be provided to scholars immediately. These services ensure that scholars remain in their least restrictive learning environment, and continue to have access to high-quality academic instruction in the general education classroom where services are offered in an inclusive classroom environment.

Description of Individuals Responsible for Carrying out Discipline Policies

The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school, and will manage all tasks related to school culture and high behavioral expectations beginning in Year 1. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access whenever there is a breach in school culture involving scholars who receive special education services. As the K-2 Assistant Principal, 3-5 Assistant Principal, and 6-8 Principal are added to the team, they will collaborate with the School Principal and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school. The school leadership team, which also includes the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will meet at least once weekly to discuss the academic, school culture, and school operations vision and goals of the school.

Informing Scholars and Parents. We will always communicate our discipline policy to families before the start of the school year, during our scholar and family orientations. Scholars and families will receive a copy of the Scholar-Family Handbook annually in their home language. In accordance with our grievance policy to be adopted by the Board of Directors, any complaints and comments regarding our school culture and high behavioral expectations, or regarding discipline actions or practices taken, will initially be addressed to and by the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal, or School Principal, as applicable. The Proposed Executive Director will also make decisions on revisions to the Scholar-Family Handbook as necessary and will submit those revisions to the Board of Director for final review and approval. Modifications to the Scholar-Family Handbook can also be made based on feedback and the consensus of the Board of Directors before final review and approval, and then they will vote on the final iteration of the handbook to be used as the official school culture and discipline policy.

Bus Ridership Expectations

Scholars have the following expectations for bus ridership:

- Scholars must always remain seated in their assigned seats.
- Scholars must be respectful and report to their parents or a teacher, school leader, or staff member when they feel unsafe or disrespected.
- Scholars must keep their hands, feet, and all personal objects on their person and inside the bus at all times.
- Scholars must follow the Code of Conduct as if they are in the classroom. Bullying behavior will not be tolerated, and fighting, harassment, and any other challenging behaviors that create an unsafe environment are forbidden.

Uniform Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) requires all scholars to wear a uniform in grades K-8. We have included in our budget for all new scholars to receive the required polo shirt and navy pants. The uniform guidelines are outlined in the chart below.

Uniform Item	Males	Females
Shirt	• Grades K-5: Green Polo Shirt w/ Novus SMART Academy (K-8) School Logo • Grades 6-8: Orange Polo Shirt w/ Novus SMART Academy (K-8) School Logo	
Bottom	Navy Blue Pants or Jumper Dress or Skirt	Navy Blue Pants
Socks	Solid Black or Brown or White or Navy Blue Socks	
Shoes	Solid Black or Brown or White or Navy Blue Closed-Toe Shoes	
Outerwear	Navy Blue Cardigan w/ Novus SMART Academy Logo (K-8) **Please Note:** The cardigan is optional; however, all other outerwear will be removed upon entrance and stored.	
Accessories	Small stud earrings only; 1 watch or 1 bracelet may be worn daily.	
Friday Attire	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) grade-level t-shirt with navy bottom; solid black or brown or white or navy blue socks; solid black or brown or white or navy blue closed-toe shoes; and cardigan (optional). **Please Note:** Scholars will have multiple opportunities to dress in their own clothes as they earn incentives and attend school events. These days are planned throughout the school year and include an explicit dress code policy.	

In the event a scholar comes to school out of uniform, the scholar will be given a clean article of clothing from the school's closet to borrow for the day before entering class. The family will be notified by phone of this occurrence and documented in PowerSchool as a uniform violation.

School Safety & Security

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) may take reasonable action against scholars and families for failure to follow school policies and procedures that may risk the safety and security of other scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members, including withdrawal from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) by suspension or expulsion. Please refer to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Code of Conduct.

Visitor Policy

All visitors are required to check in at the front desk when entering our school campus. Visitors must present their state identification card to the Officer Manager or designee to be verified by our Visitor Management System that conducts background checks for all visitors. This system allows office staff to assess potential risks before granting access to the school. Once a visitor receives clearance from the Office Manager or designee to enter the school building, they must sign-in and report directly to the whereabouts of their visit. If a visitor does not receive clearance based on information presented in our Raptor school safety technology, the visitor will be asked to leave the school campus immediately. Refusal to leave the school campus will result in contacting school security for support. Visitors must also always wear a visitor's badge on a school lanyard around their necks during their school visits. Any visitors, including family members of scholars, who do not report to

the office or are found in the school building without authorization will be asked, first, to sign-in at the front desk and, second, to leave immediately when they are noncompliant. Refusal to leave will result in contacting school security for support.

Family Communication

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will always have clear systems and procedures for contacting scholars' families, in cases of emergency, illness, or challenging behavior requiring immediate family contact. Families should notify the school of any residential changes, phone number changes or emergency contact changes, or any family dynamics that may impact scholars' academic success or incite changes in behaviors. In case of an emergency, families should contact the Office Manager or designee by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should families contact scholars in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw scholars from the school building without notifying our school office.

Novus Noble Family Advisory Council

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will form a Novus Noble Family Advisory Council consisting of the Proposed Executive Director, at least one teacher per grade level, and at least two parents per grade level. The Novus Noble Family Advisory Council will meet at a minimum of once per quarter, and as often as once per month. The primary purpose of the council is to engage families of the school, create opportunities for families to be engaged often at the school, launch annual listening campaigns where the council actively seeks the input of families, and find ways to support and encourage the teachers in our school. At minimum, we ask all families to commit to the following:

- Annually review, sign, and meet the expectations of our Scholar-Family-School Commitments.
- Share concerns and support school decisions and policies;
- Support scholars at home in completing lifework, reading assignments, and any other school-related tasks.
- Actively communicate with scholars regarding academic results and behavioral progress, and communicate with the Council about concerns;
- Attend Noble Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning.
- Return phone calls from the school.
- Communicate scholars' needs and changes in behavior for the school to effectively partner in monitoring character development.

Nondiscriminatory Policy

In accordance with T.C.A § 49-13-107(b)(9) and our mission to provide all scholars with access to a high-quality academic education, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) does not discriminate towards scholars and families who choose to enroll in our school as it relates to race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, English proficiency, or need for special education services or disability of any kind. All scholars deserve a high-quality academic instructional experience regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

Application Process

In compliance with TCA§49-13-113(b)(1), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will enroll any eligible scholar and family who applies, in a timely manner, to our school if there are seats available based on the capacity of our program, class sizes, grade level and/or building. Any scholar residing in Rutherford County, Tennessee is eligible for enrollment in our school. We accept applications for enrollment online, mail, or in-person for submission. The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) enrollment team will gather basic information from the application forms and transfer the information into our secure application database and student information system so that we may communicate with families about their enrollment status. We will maintain original applications until the following year's lottery process in case scholars are later enrolled. The application window will open on January 1st, and the application deadline will be January 31st at 5:00 pm.

Admissions Preferences

In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(A), if applications exceed the planned capacity of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the following preferences shall apply

1. Scholars attending public schools within the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, if those pupils would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus;
2. Scholars residing within the LEA service area in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, but who are not enrolled in public schools, if those scholars would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus; and
3. Scholars residing outside the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located and whose needs would be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus.

In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(c), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to reserve up to ten percent (10%) or twenty-five seats, whichever is less, for preference of enrollment of scholars of teachers, sponsors, or member of governing body of the charter school if it is based on family choice and family submits a timely application. In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(d), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will give preference to siblings of a scholar who is already enrolled in the school.

Enrollment Process

Once admitted to the school, all families must complete and submit an enrollment packet that includes the following: Home Language Survey; enrollment forms; immunization records; transportation needs and preferences; and medical history documents. Registration requirements include two (2) proofs of residence, and Tennessee health certificates must be filled out by medical providers for all scholars entering kindergarten, grade seven, and any new scholars to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Medical physicals are required for all new scholars enrolling at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), and/or who want to participate in our sports programs. Kindergarten Eligibility: According to state law, scholars entering kindergarten must be five (5) years old on or before August 15, 2026 to enroll in kindergarten.

Lottery

In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(B), if applications received for enrollment by the end of our application period whose qualifications meet the preferences stated above exceed our planned capacity, we will conduct a lottery that will be facilitated using PowerSchools' Unified Operations Enrollment system. The lottery will occur within fifteen (15) days of the close of application period, on/before February 20th, during which names will be randomly selected for each available seat. Within ten (10) days, notifications will be sent to scholars and families about the lottery via email and through the United States postal services. Scholars and families do not have to attend the lottery to be offered a seat at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). All scholars and families will be notified after the close of the lottery. Any scholar that does not secure a seat based on the lottery will be granted a space on the waitlist. Families will be notified by email and mail of their scholar's waitlist status at the same time as scholars are accepted into the school. Any scholar accepted from the waitlist will have one week from the date of acceptance to accept the available seat by submitting all required enrollment paperwork to the Office Manager. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) with respect to the publication of any list of scholars' names before, during or after the enrollment and lottery process.

Attachment F Cover Page

Student Discipline Policy
REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

NOVUS SMART ACADEMY (K-8)

Scholar-Family Handbook
2026-2027

College and career begin in Kindergarten!!

Overview

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will open its doors to 192 scholars and families in Grades K-1 in the fall of August 2026. We are committed to providing high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations, which are the foundation of our mission, vision, and Noble Core Values.

Mission

Novus SMART Academy provides scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career begin in Kindergarten.

Vision

Novus SMART Academy produces global achievers through high-quality academic instruction, character development and relentless ambition for success in life.

Noble Core Values	Meaning
Academic Excellence	We believe our scholars and families deserve access to a high-quality academic educational experience that fosters a relentless drive for academic success, innovation, and personal growth.
Beacon of Joy	We emanate JOY as ripples of inspiration, fostering a positive school culture of belonging(ness), acceptance, and character development for our scholars and families, teachers and staff members, and members of our school community.
Character Development	We promote values that cultivate self-awareness through the development of essential life skills, transforming lives and impacting our community for generations to come.
Habits for Humanity	We foster a school community as changemakers, partnering together to model transformational leadership and stewardship, reaching new heights of greatness, and making a positive impact on the world.
Intellectual Curiosity	We believe in fostering rigorous learning experiences between our teachers and scholars as they question, discover, and pursue knowledge relentlessly with rigorous curricula.

College & Career Begin in Kindergarten

Establishing a culture where scholars and families, teacher and school leaders, and staff members understand the importance of college and career readiness is our priority at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). High quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations allow us to provide and sustain a consistent learning environment for our scholars. Over time, consistency builds trust, and trust builds investment and authentic engagement. When we celebrate our scholars for modeling our Noble Core Values, we invest in their goals of choosing their college and career paths. For scholars to access high-quality academic instruction in the classroom, teachers must have high behavioral expectations in the classroom.

Scholar-Family-School Commitments & Accountability. We are committed to fostering a positive school environment for scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members so that every minute of the school day yields positive results. We know scholars and families deserve and have the right to attend schools that promote learning and achievement, pushing scholars towards their chosen college and career paths. We also understand that schools cannot have a high-quality academic instructional program without a strong school culture and with high behavioral expectations. We will collect and analyze data, use the data to plan and practice, teach and support, and model and monitor the character and high behavioral expectations we want to see in our scholars and families. We will reinforce our school culture expectations with research-based strategies that are scientifically proven to create high-performing schools with innovative practices. Nobly, we will promote a high-quality academic environment and reinforce our mission through our following commitments: Rigorous Curricula, High-Quality Academic Instruction, Inclusive Support, and Character Development.

We believe that high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations require the collaboration and commitment of scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members to support overall success. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will foster support that is fairly, firmly and consistently implemented to create a positive learning environment where scholars feel known, loved and respected as humans, first, and psychologically safe to take risks and enjoy learning with their peers. We appreciate your commitment to Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and we will prioritize your scholar's education and future. We are a public charter school, therefore signing these contracts is not required for attendance in our school. We need

to ensure there is clarity on our expectations at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The commitments below outline our school culture and high behavioral expectations to ensure accountability to our mission, mission, and Noble Core Values.

Family Commitments

Attendance & Promotion

4. I commit to supporting Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s high-quality academic instructional model and high behavioral expectations for my scholar's holistic success in school.
5. I commit to my scholar attending school during an extended day and extended school year.
6. I commit to ensuring my scholar arrives at school on time every day, in the proper uniform, for a full day of learning. Please Note: Exceptions are made when your scholar is sick or not able to attend school due to unforeseen family circumstances.

Homework & Academic Support

5. I commit to reviewing and monitoring my scholar's lifework, academic progress, and behavior reports regularly.
6. I commit to ensuring a calm and quiet place for my scholar to complete lifework and read each night.
7. I will sign my scholar's lifework folder and behavior log each night and support them when they need help and encouragement.
8. I commit to communicating and asking questions when I need clarification about my scholar's educational experience.

Behavior & Dress Code

6. I understand my scholar will have consequences and/or loss of privileges if my scholar does not comply with rules and expectations of the school.
7. I understand my scholar's behavior will be managed through the Response to Intervention-Behavior (MTSS-Behavior) process, and an out-of-school suspension may be issued for challenging behaviors outlined in our Discipline Policy.
8. I understand Novus SMART Academy (K-8) works to ensure a safe environment for all scholars and bullying will not be tolerated in any form.
9. I understand my scholar will participate in a character development education program.
10. I commit to ensuring my scholar is fully dressed in the proper school uniform every day.

Family Support & Communication

4. I commit to communicating and working as part of the team to ensure my scholar excels both academically and behaviorally. I will review and sign daily behavior logs, progress reports, report cards, and any correspondence sent home by the school.
5. I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
6. I commit to giving my effort to these commitments, giving my scholar the opportunities they deserve and need.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Scholar Commitments

10. I understand the Noble Core Values and will do my best to always follow them.
11. I commit to attending school every day unless I experience sickness or unforeseen family circumstances.
12. I commit to completing all my assignments with academic excellence, presenting quality work every time.
13. I commit to completing my lifework every night. My lifework will be neat, placed in my lifework folder, and submitted to my teacher every day.
14. I commit to the high behavioral expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and during all school functions, on and off campus.
15. I commit to following the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) uniform policy and dress code.
16. I commit to communicating with my parents/guardians about my progress, including grades, assignments, goals, and behavior.
17. I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
18. I commit to making my best effort to these commitments to give myself the opportunities I deserve and need.

Scholar Print Name: _____

Scholar Signature: _____

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Commitments

High-Quality Academic Instruction

3. We commit to being fully prepared to teach our scholars daily by completing daily prep, anticipating scholar misconceptions, and reviewing data for Tier I, II, III differentiated instruction as needed for Response to Intervention (MTSS-Academics).

4. We commit to continuous professional learning and development, and I desire to constantly refine my practices to provide scholars with a quality education.

Respect

5. We commit to creating a sense of belonging(ness) for every scholar so that they feel known, loved, and respected by their peers and all adults.
6. We commit to teaching and modeling Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Noble Core Values to develop each scholar's character over time. I commit to collaborating with my scholars' families on their progress towards modeling our Noble Core Values.
7. We commit to recognizing and rewarding scholars that are excelling through our program and providing interventions for those experiencing challenges.
8. We commit to providing consequences for challenging behaviors as warranted and outlined in our discipline policy.

Communication

3. We commit to communicating with families about our scholars' academic and behavior progress regularly.
4. We commit to returning parent phone calls, emails, and conference requests within 24 hours or next business day following a weekend and/or school break.

Homework (Lifework)

3. We commit to providing daily lifework to reinforce intellectual curiosity.
4. We commit to communicating with families when a scholar needs additional support or fails to complete lifework.

Safety

4. We commit to providing a safe school environment for all scholars. We commit to adhering to ADA compliance and regulations annotated in the Tennessee law regarding public charter schools.
5. We have read and understand the Code of Conduct.
6. We commit to providing a high-quality academic educational experience that ensures all scholars have opportunities for success, regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

Novus Representative Signature: _____

Attendance Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will align its Attendance Policy to the Rutherford County Schools' Attendance Policy. Attendance is a key factor in scholar achievement, and therefore, scholars are expected to be present each day school is in session. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all scholars, parents, teachers, and administrative staff.

The Office Manager or designee shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:

6. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
7. Alternative program options for scholars who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
8. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
9. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for scholars applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
10. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a scholar with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.

Scholar attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other scholar records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to scholar information without the consent of the scholar or parent/guardian.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the Proposed Executive Director. If an absence is unexcused, the work missed may be made up for credit within five (5) days of returning to school from said absence.

Out-of-school suspension days will be considered unexcused absences and scholars absent for out-of-school suspension shall be allowed to make up the work missed within five (5) days of returning to school from said absence and receive eighty percent (80%) of the grade earned. If a grade was not taken for the day missed, no deduction in grades will occur because of the absence.

Excused Absences

12. Personal Illness/Injury Attendance
    1. A note from the scholar's parent/guardian or legal custodian will be required upon the scholar's return to school. The note should include the reason(s) for and the date(s) of the absence.

2. The school may accept a written note from a parent/guardian or legal custodian for up to a total of eight (8) accumulated days during the school year for any absence. However, if a scholar is absent more than a total of eight (8) accumulated days, a doctor's note specifying dates for illness must be submitted for any subsequent absences due to illness to be excused.

13. Illness of Immediate Family Member
    1. A doctor's statement is required after three (3) days. An immediate family member is defined as a scholar's parent/guardian or sibling.
14. Death in the Family
    1. One day shall be excused for the death of family members. Additional days will be excused at the discretion of the principal.
    2. If the death is not of a family member, the principal may approve as an unexcused absence with appropriate documentation.
15. Extreme Weather Conditions: If there are extreme weather conditions, such as, but not limited to, snow, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow the direction of Rutherford County Schools' cancellation policy. We will also make announcements of closures on social media, local television and radio stations, and on our school website.
16. Religious Observances
17. Military Service of Parent/Guardian
    1. School principals shall provide scholars with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment of and a one-day excused absence upon the return of a parent/guardian or immediate family member serving active military service.
    2. Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for scholars to visit a parent/guardian during a deployment cycle. The scholar shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his/her parent's/guardian's deployment. Scholars shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during these absences.
18. Pregnancy
19. School-Endorsed Activities
20. Summons, Subpoena, or Court Order
    1. Written verification of the appearance and the time involved must be submitted upon the scholar's return to school. These excuses may be obtained through the Court Clerk's office.
21. Non-School-Sponsored Extracurricular Activities 39
    1. Documentation of the scholar's participation in the non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities must be submitted;
    2. The scholar's parent/guardian submits to the principal a written request for the excused absence no later than seven (7) business days prior to the scholar's absence.
    3. The principal, in writing, approves the scholar's excused absence.
    4. The principal may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities for which excused absences may be granted to a scholar during the school year.
    5. The principal shall excuse no more than ten (10) absences each school year for scholars participating in non-school-sponsored extracurricular activities.
22. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the scholar has no control.

The Office Manager shall be responsible for ensuring the following:

6. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
7. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate scholars present or absent for the majority of the day;
8. All scholar absences are verified;
9. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
10. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

Unexcused Absences & Truancy. Any scholar absent from school outside of the reasons outlined above will receive an unexcused absence. If a scholar has excessive unexcused absences he/she will be flagged for truancy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will follow Tennessee State Law (TCA 49-6-3007) when reporting truancy.

Annually, the Proposed Executive Director or designee will provide written notice to the family that attendance at school is required. Scholars shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day to be counted present. Scholars receiving special education services may attend part time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes. If a scholar is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the families and the school system provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.

Scholars who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Proposed Executive Director or designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the families of the scholar's absence. If a family does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences or request an attendance hearing, then the Proposed Executive Director or designee shall implement tier two of the progressive truancy plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court. The Proposed Executive Director or designee shall develop appropriate administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan	
Tier I	Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all scholars at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. These supports shall include, but are not limited to, sharing of expectations online and in the Scholar-Family Handbook, communicating tardies and absences to families daily, providing transportation, and sharing community resources such as before and after-school care options.
Tier II	Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the scholar accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court, and includes the following: 5. A conference with the scholar and the scholar's family; 6. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the scholar, the family, and the Attendance Proposed Executive Director or designee. The contract shall include: 1. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the scholar; 2. The period for which the contract is effective; and 3. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court. 7. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the scholar's progress; and 8. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a scholar has been absent from school. The employee may refer the scholar to counseling, community based services, or other services to address the scholar's attendance problems.
Tier III	Tier III shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful. Tier III may consist of the following interventions, to be determined by the Proposed Executive Director or designee as needed: 3. Utilizing truancy officers, peer mentors, social workers, or other appropriate staff to encourage consistent attendance, and/or 4. Meet with families to ascertain needs and hindrances to attendance, offering recommendations for community resources such as before and after school care, and/or discuss transportation needs and assist with problem-solving those needs. The interventions shall address scholars' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Proposed Executive Director or designee.

Make-up Work. Any scholar issued an excused absence may have the opportunity to make up any missed schoolwork. All scholars will be expected to make-up work to receive credit for missed classwork within 10 days of the initial missed absence. Any missed work not made up during this time period may negatively impact a scholar's class grade. Scholars will be provided extra support on missed work during extracurricular time, recess, and choice time until the work is made up. For unexcused absences, students may have one day of makeup work time to complete missed assignments for each day missed for up to 5 days. If absences exceed 10 days, the family must attend a meeting with the Proposed Executive Director or designee to determine a plan for make-up work and support for the student to be on track for the rest of the academic year.

Perfect Attendance. To be eligible for perfect attendance, a scholar must be in attendance for a length of time equal to the state's minimum hourly requirement for a school day. To have perfect attendance in a particular class, a scholar must be present every day for over half of the class period. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of observance of a day set aside as sacred by a religious denomination of which the scholar is a member or adherent, shall be deemed to have met the requirements of perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to such observance. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of a scheduled visit to a college or university shall be deemed to have met the requirements of perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to such visit. Any scholar who misses class or a day of school because of earning an exemption from exams shall be deemed to have met the requirements for perfect attendance if his/her only absences were related to the exemptions.

Positive Incentives for Perfect Attendance. Our goal is to maintain a 95% attendance rate or better throughout the school year and across all years. To support high attendance, we will provide incentives to individual scholars and to classes on each grade level. We will highlight individual scholars by recognizing them during our Friday Celebrations at Nobel Fest for weekly perfect attendance. We will highlight the class with the best monthly attendance rate at our Noble Fest at the end of each month. Each quarter, we will celebrate scholars with perfect attendance during our quarterly honors programs. Our Noble Fest occurs at the culmination of each school week, but we reserve the last Noble Fest of each quarter for members of our community to join us in celebrating our scholars and parents for meeting and exceeding our expectations in partnership.

Tardies. Being on time to school and class is essential for optimum teaching and learning. When a scholar is tardy, he/she disrupts this process for others and loses important learning time for himself/herself. School bus transportation will be provided free of charge to scholars of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). For this reason, tardies related to car problems, traffic, oversleeping, etc. are not valid reasons for tardiness. To receive an excused tardy when late to school, the scholar must either:

4. Have a doctor's statement;
5. An official court notice; or
6. Receive a parent conference or a parent's telephone call and approval by the administration. Personal illness would be excused.

Early Dismissal. Families must call the school in advance and provide a written notice to the school to explain the early dismissal. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) discourages early dismissal unless there are extenuating circumstances. The family must sign out the scholar in the main office with the Office Manager before removing the scholar from the school. The school will document early dismissals as absent if the student is present for less than 3 1⁄2 hours of instructional time on any given day.

Attendance Hearings. Scholars with excessive (more than 5) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the Proposed Executive Director or designee. If the scholar chooses to appeal, the scholar or his/her family shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or to determine if the scholar has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Proposed Executive Director or designee and the family of the scholar of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parents/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Proposed Executive Director or designee. The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Proposed Executive Director/designee rendering a decision, the scholar's family may request a hearing by the board, and the board shall review the record. Following the review, the board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Proposed Executive Director or designee. The action of the board shall be final.

State-Mandated Assessments. Scholars who are absent the day of their scheduled TNReady assessments must present a signed doctor's excuse or must have been given an excused release by the Proposed Executive Director or designee prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Scholars who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused scholars will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the TNReady assessments. Scholars who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the course exam which shall be averaged into their final grade.

Health

When a scholar becomes ill during school hours or is ill during the school day and not able to stay in class, families will be called to pick up the scholar for early dismissal. Therefore, accurate emergency contact information is needed on file for adequate communication. If a scholar needs to take any prescription medicine the family must obtain the appropriate documentation from the medical provider, giving the school nurse or designee permission to administer the medicine to the scholar. If at any time during the school year the scholar contracts one of the following infectious diseases, please seek medical attention and avoid bringing the child to school: flu, chickenpox, conjunctivitis, strep throat, lice, stomach flu/virus, ringworm.

Family Engagement

In alignment to our Scholar-Family-School Commitments & Accountability signed by scholars and families, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) expects our families to participate in their scholars' learning throughout the school year in the following ways, but not limited to: Noble Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning. Throughout the year, we will host activities to engage our scholars and families in our community such as Community Circle, service-learning projects and community service, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, and Goodies for Grandparent's Day.

Lifework (Homework)

Lifework is an essential component of our high-quality academic program. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will assign homework Monday through Thursday, with opportunities to extend learning over the weekend as needed. We believe it is essential for families to review their scholars' lifework every night. Lifework includes 15 minutes of required reading every night, and all scholars will be given a lifework academic folder that includes the work they need to complete as well as a daily reading log. If lifework is consistently late, missing, incomplete, or poor in quality, the scholar's family will be notified.

Progress Reports, Report Cards, & Scholar-led Conferences

Teachers and staff members will use daily Noble progress reports and report cards to communicate scholars' academic and behavioral performance. Report cards will be picked up by families during our report card pick up days throughout the year. This will give teachers an opportunity to schedule required conferences with families whose scholars are failing classes or having challenges with behavior to discuss support. Our scholars will also engage in scholar-led conferences where they will

present their own data to their accountability team (i.e., teachers, parents, and one other person of their choice) to support their learning and development over time.

Promotion Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s promotion policy is rooted in a balance of understanding that while scholars learn at different rates and may experience plateaus at different times as they grow, mastery of grade level academic standards is the best measure for promotion to the next grade level. It ensures that a scholar can be successful in the academic challenges of the next grade level. Grade-level promotion is determined based on attendance, scholar mastery of content as depicted in final grades, and final exam requirements. Additionally, we consider the whole-child and may retain scholars who demonstrate significantly below grade level social development. Denial determinations may include scholar attendance; however, scholar attendance may not be the sole criterion. If attendance is a factor, prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

3. The scholar and the parent/guardian shall be advised if the scholar is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism.
4. Procedures in due process are available to the scholar when credit or promotion is denied.

Special Education

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) believes in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all scholars. FAPE mandates that the school provides access to general education and specialized educational services. A student may receive special education services only through the proper evaluation and placement procedures. Family involvement in this procedure is required. A family who believes their scholar may have a disability that interferes substantially with their ability to function properly in school should contact the Proposed Executive Director or designee.

School Culture

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will implement an approach to discipline that promotes restorative practices that empower scholars to move past their mistakes to make better decisions in the future. There will be times when challenging behaviors are addressed with disciplinary actions; however, we will fairly, firmly, and consistently use the MTSS-Behavior framework as a proactive approach to prevent scholars' challenging behaviors through data-driven planning and intervention practices that support their needs. We will use Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) to support scholars in their understanding of their lagging skills and to reduce their challenging behaviors, activating their voice and choice through Plan B conversations that lead to restoration and overall scholar success. Our MTSS-Behavior framework will provide space for grace with accountability while leveraging the support of teachers, school leaders and staff members to support scholars objectively over time without judgment.

PowerSchool. PowerSchool is an online platform that we will use to document and communicate scholar's positive and challenging behaviors for grades K-8. We will use data collected to inform our MTSS-Behavior Framework.

Practices to Promote Good Discipline, including Penalties and Incentives. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide Tier I high behavioral expectations and support for all scholars. Our teachers and school leaders will consistently use the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence for classroom management to support with school culture as follows:

Get Better Faster Scope & Sequence: Management Trajectory	
Phase 1: Summer Professional Development & Learning to Develop Essential Routines & Procedures	
What	**How**
Routines & Procedures 101 Design and roll out… • Plan and practice critical routines and procedures moment-by moment. • Plan and practice the roll out: how to introduce routine for the first time.	• Explain what each routine means and what it will look like. • Write out what teachers and scholars do at each step, and what will happen with the scholars who do not get it right at first.
	• Plan the "I Do": how you will model the routine. • Plan the practice and what you will do when scholars don't get it right the first time.
Confident Presence: Stand and speak with purpose.	• Confident Stance: When giving instructions, stop moving, and strike a formal pose.

	• Warm-Demander Register: When giving directions, use a warm but firm register, including tone and word choice.
Phase 2: Roll Out & Monitor Routines & Build Trust & Rapport	
What	**How**
What to Do: Use the economy of language when giving directions.	• Chunk your directions by giving them one-by-one in a sequential order. • Make them bite-sized (e.g., 3-5 words) and observable. • Check for understanding of complex instructions.

See Your Scholars: Know when scholars are engaged or unengaged.	• Make eye contact by looking at all scholars for on-task engagement. Choose 3-4 focus areas (Places where you have scholars often off task) to look towards consistently.
	• Circulate the room with purpose (break the plane).
	  ○ Move along the desks and around the perimeter.
	  ○ Stand at the corners by identifying 3 spots on the perimeter of the room to which you can circulate to stand and monitor scholar work.
	  ○ Move away from the scholar who is speaking to monitor the whole room.

Routines & Procedures 201: Revise and perfect them.	• Revise any routine that needs more attention to detail or is inefficient, emphasizing what scholars and teachers are doing at each moment. • Do it again by having scholars do the same routine again if initially incorrect.
Build Trust & Rapport: Narrate the Positive	• Warm welcome by making eye contact, smiling, and greeting scholars. • Narrate what scholars do well, not what they do wrong. • “Table two is ready. Their books are open and all are reading.” • “I like how Javon has anticipated a counter-argument to strengthen his thesis”. • Praise intellect, not just behavior and reinforce scholars getting smarter. • Affirm the effort, not just the outcome: “Your diligence on revising your thesis really paid off here”. • When narrating the positive, look at scholars who are off task.
Build Trust & Rapport: Make Authentic Connections	• Memorize scholar names and use them each time you call on them. • Make a self-to-scholar connection when they share a struggle, interest, or passion: “I struggled when…” or “I love that, too!” • Show genuine concern by keeping a tracker or important details and dates for each scholar to follow up with them; checking in with them after class when something is off.
Phase 3: Engage Every Scholar	
What	**How**

Whole-Class Reset	• Implement a planned whole-class reset to reestablish scholar expectations when a class routine has slowly weakened over previous classes.
	  ○ “I’ve noticed that only 40% of us are writing endnotes. These are important because they demonstrate your understanding of the text. Today I’ll be looking for endnotes in all your annotations”.
	• Implement an “in-the-moment reset” when a class veers off task during the class period.
	  ○ Example: Stop teaching. Confident stance. Clear What-to-Do: “Pencil down. Eyes on me in 3-2-1. Thank you. That’s what Harvard looks like”. Pick up tone and energy again.

Engage All Scholars: Make sure all scholars participate.	• Cold call by recording which scholars participate in each class; cold call those scholars who do not to ensure everyone participates.
	• Pre-call/warm call by letting a scholar who needs more time know you are calling their person next.
	• Turn-and-talk by implementing briefly (15-60 seconds) and frequently.
	• Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion by cold calling, all hands, and turn-and-talks.
	• Provided support to scholars with pre-identified needs.
	  ○ Executive Functioning (e.g., checklist, written steps, timer).
	  ○ Social Support (e.g., communication strategies, strategies for resolving conflict).
	  ○ Stress (e.g., strategies for naming and managing).

Individual Scholar Corrections	• Anticipate unengaged scholar behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect scholar using the least invasive intervention necessary:
	  ○ Proximity
	  ○ Eye Contact
	  ○ Use a Non-Verbal
	  ○ Say scholar's Name Quickly
	  ○ Small Consequence
	• Engage in "close the loop" conversations with scholars to process what happened and improve for next time.

Phase 4: Increase the Momentum of the Classroom	
What	**How**
Build the Momentum	• Give the scholars a simple challenge to complete a task. ○ Example: "Now I know you're only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master"! • Warm Energy: Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, and smile.
Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that scholars feel constantly engaged.	• Use a hand-held timer to stick to the time stamps in the lesson and give scholars an audio cue that it is time to move on. • Increase the rate of questioning no more than two seconds between when a scholar responds and a teacher picks back up instruction. • Use countdowns to work the clock: "Do that in 5, 4, 3, 2,1". • Use call and response for keywords.

Engaged Small Group Work: Maximize the learning for every scholar during group work.	• Deliver explicit step-by-step instructions for group work.
	  ○ Make the group tasks visible/easily observable (e.g., a handout to fill in, notes to take, product to build, etc.).
	  ○ Create a role for every person (with each group no larger than the number of roles needed to accomplish the tasks at hand).
	  ○ Give timed instructions, with benchmarks for where the group should be after each time window.
	• Monitor the visual evidence of group progress.
	  ○ Check in on each group every 5-10 minutes to monitor progress.
	• Verbally enforce individual and group accountability.
	  ○ "You are five minutes behind; get back on track".
	  ○ "Lorena: focus".

Stretch It: Next Steps	
What	**How**
Keep it up!	Once you get this far, you can focus nearly entirely on rigor and deepening your content knowledge.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain the sacredness of high-quality academic instruction through consistently implementing our school culture and high behavioral expectations, and proactively responding to the challenging behaviors of scholars immediately. We have modeled our school culture and high behavioral expectations after the schoolwide discipline plans from BES schools such as Memphis Merit Academy in Memphis, Tennessee; Power Center Academy Middle School-Hickory Hill in Memphis, Tennessee; and Purpose Preparatory Academy in Nashville, Tennessee.

We believe that a common system of rules and consequences consistently and fairly enforced by all teachers, school leaders, and staff members to maximize student time on task and overall academic achievement. The following chart displays our behavior management system for our Lower School (grades K-4).

Behavior Management System Description & Consequences
Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use a physical clip chart in grades K-4 so that scholars can visually track their own behavior daily as teachers and school leaders provide clear What-to-Do directions, redirections, and consequences. Our behavior system is color-coded as follows:

Blue	Noble Behavior w/ No Redirections (0) Scholar demonstrates exemplary Noble Core Values in their actions, language and/or behaviors.
Green	Low-to-No Redirections (1-3) Scholar consistently demonstrates Noble Core Values during the instructional day.
Yellow	Moderate Redirections (4-6) The teacher has given an official warning to the scholar as a reminder of not meeting high behavioral expectations in the classroom. Consequently, the scholar's clip is moved to yellow on the clip chart.
Orange	Recurring Redirections & Recorded in PowerSchool (7-9) The scholar has received two warnings and needs to be temporarily separated from teammates to reset or to cool down in the classroom. Classroom cooldowns will not take more than five (5) minutes. While scholars are cooling down, they will sit in a designated area in the classroom and are expected to sit in the chair, lace their fingers, and sit silently until the teacher calls them back to rejoin the class.
Red	Recurring Redirections & Challenging Behaviors, Teacher-Scholar Conferences, Call Hone, Recorded in PowerSchool (10 or more) Scholar has demonstrated ongoing challenging behaviors and failed to get back on track independently. Scholar automatically moves to red when displaying a severe challenging misbehavior related to physical or verbal aggression. The scholar will be removed from class and required to conference with either the Proposed Executive Director or designee. These Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) conferences are quick, direct and followed by an immediate call home. This may result in future loss of privilege, such as, but not limited to, attending Noble Fest, going on a field trip, and/or other school-based incentives.
Grey	Scholar removed from class at least two times and the challenging behavior continues to be significantly disruptive to the learning environment. The Proposed Executive Director or designee will contact a family member to pick up the scholar from the school or to complete work separate from the classroom with a designated staff member.

Daily Behavior Logs	Noble Reports are sent home daily in scholars' take-home folders, identifying each scholars' color for behavior in the morning and after lunch, and any additional notes from the teacher concerning challenging behaviors. Parents are required to sign reports and can write messages back to the teacher.
Reinforced Positive Behaviors	Our goal is to build habits of character and help scholars achieve success through positive behaviors. We will use positive narrations, public praise and recognition, and formal awards- such as Novus Nobles of the Week and Novus Nobles of the Month- to highlight scholars during our weekly Noble Fest on Fridays, where we will also praise college cohorts for reaching team goals tied to academics, classroom culture, attendance and completion rates during blended learning.

Incentives. When scholars model positive behaviors that align to our high behavioral expectations and Noble Core Values, they will receive incentives. The first incentive that scholars can earn is being moved up a color on the behavior clip chart. We will also provide weekly rewards and incentives on Fridays in preparation for Noble Fest as follows:

- After two days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker.

- After three days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker and will be celebrated at Nobel Fest.
- After four days of modeling positive behaviors in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, and pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures.
    - Scholars who are Blue or Green at least four days in one week will have the opportunity to be named the scholar of the week in their college cohorts.
    - The scholar of the week will receive a certificate and a free book of their choice to be presented during advisory time on Fridays.
    - Scholars of the week are automatically eligible to be named the scholar of the month as determined by academics, attendance and behavior.
- After five days in one week, scholars will receive a sticker, be celebrated at Nobel Fest, pull a prize from the Noble Chest of Treasures, and receive a special snack from our mobile desert cart.

We will recognize each grade-level scholar of the month by hanging their pictures outside of their classroom doors and on the main entrance bulletin board for the next month in celebration of their demonstration of our Noble Core Values and high behavioral expectations.

Our scholars in grades 5-8 have a separate high behavioral expectations system that includes the tracking of our Noble Core Values and minor/major infractions tied to challenging behaviors. These behaviors, whether positive or challenging, are logged in our PowerSchool system as follows:

Modeling High Behavioral Expectations	
Noble Core Value	**Example**
Academic Excellence (+15)	• Taking skills learned to make future decisions that lead to success; capable of anything. • Relentlessly driven to succeed in pursuit of colleges and careers and beyond. • Academic honesty (exceeding school and/or classroom expectations). • Writing in college sentences when not specified in the directions. • Finding the third way to understand a skill (even when hard). • Embracing new ideas and/or challenging work. • Remaining on task throughout the class. • Taking notes in class when not required. • Thoroughness (redoing an assignment because you know you can do better).
Beacon of Joy (+15)	• Supporting others as a partner in pursuit of success. • Finding space in the world by tapping into joy to spread it to others. • Acts of courageous behavior. • Noticing effort or growth in a classmate and encouraging them/shouting them out.
Character Development (+15)	• Self-aware and understand how actions impact others. • Giving and receiving constructive feedback that helps self and others to learn and grow together. • Unafraid to fail, but learning how to succeed moving forward. • Willing and eager to say the right answer after previously giving a wrong answer. • Owning a mistake without being asked to own it and offering an apology without blaming others. • Organization of personal belongings and/or space. • Demonstration of self-control. • Telling the truth, even if it means someone will get the consequence. • Doing the right things when nobody is watching. • Responding quickly and appropriately to redirection.
Habits for Humanity (+15)	• Using creative talents to support the needs of others.

	• Breaking free from limiting beliefs to change the game for self and others. • Displaying positive leadership. • Establishing integrity among peers. • Providing group and individual support to classmates as needed. • Getting homework from another scholar because they left theirs at school.
Intellectual Curiosity (+15)	• Using curiosity to discover and pursue new knowledge. • Asking questions and using prior knowledge to develop my own solutions. • Asking for help or asking clarifying questions in class when others seem to understand the lesson/concept.
Minor Infractions	
Challenging Behavior	**Example**
Talking (-5)	• Talking out of turn. • Inappropriate volume. • Making inappropriate noises.
Off Task (-5)	• Reading a book instead of focusing during the lesson. • Drawing on paper. • Dozing off. • Passing notes. • Working on non-related work.
Disruptive (-5)	• Kicking the table or chair. • Making any unnecessary noises in class or at whole school events. • Pencil tapping, drumming, singing/rapping in class. • Slamming book or door.
Organization/Unprepared (-5)	• Not having class materials (writing utensil, notebook, packet, etc.). • Does not have an agenda. • Being late to class without a pass (give the mark but keep the scholar in class. Do not send them to get a pass).
Major Infractions	
Challenging Behavior & Rationale	**Example**
Disrespect to Adults (-15): All teachers, school leaders and staff members have the right to speak and redirect scholars throughout the building. Interactions between scholars and adults should always be positive and promoting; however, the adult must always remain emotionally constant when handling challenging behaviors.	• Talking back or yelling at or to an adult. • Cursing at an adult. • Walking away from an adult. • Inappropriate physical actions toward an adult (may warrant a suspension).
Failure to Comply (-15): It is important that all scholars meet the expectations of teachers, school leaders, and staff members daily. When scholars do not meet expectations, it impacts the culture of the learning environment and takes the focus off learning. Teachers cannot allow scholars to undermine their authority as the leader of the classroom.	• Shouting out. • Slow response to directions. • Non-compliance with transition procedures. • Sleeping in class. • Prohibited use of technology (may lead to loss of technology use based on the nature of the offense).
Inappropriate Response (-15): It is important that scholars advocate for themselves. However, there	• Rolling Eyes • Smacking Lips

are appropriate ways to disagree with someone that fosters discussion and growth. When responding, we want to help scholars become aware of those responses that are disrespectful and hinder a growth conversation.	• Speaking back in a raised voice. • Sucking Teeth
Unprofessional (-15): Dressing for success is important to help us cut down on the amount of distractions that take away from learning time. We all have a uniform we wear that shows that we are present and ready to work. In addition to looking professional, there are duties that come along with the "job." We are trying to build in the habit of accountability to major duties for our scholars.	• Combing/Braiding Hair in Class • Writing on body or uniform. • Putting on Makeup in Class • Shirt Untucked (out of uniform generally) • Sleeping in class after reminders to stand or walk around. • Chewing gum, eating in class, etc. • Horseplaying or Throwing Objects • Failure to turn in progress reports or other signed forms. • Phone rings in class. • On the wrong website, or inappropriate use of school materials.
Disrespect to Community (-15): As a school, we are fostering a culture of respect. Respect for each other and respect for learning must be paramount. We do not allow disrespect and take it very seriously because we want all scholars and staff members to work in a safe environment.	• Classroom Disruption • Cafeteria Disruption • Inappropriate body language. • Calling someone a negative name. • Pushing/kicking/hitting someone. • Use of profanity. • Seeking a different answer (one teacher says no, you ask another teacher). • Writing on school property. • Refusing to respond to a staff member. • Inappropriate use of technology. • Disrespect toward peers/adults. • Copying work/cheating on classwork, test, or quiz. • Refusing to follow a specific direction. • Walking away from a staff member. • Skipping others in line for breakfast or lunch.
Out of Area (-15): It is our responsibility to keep our scholars safe. Therefore, it is important that we know where scholars are at all times. This helps our scholars learn responsibility and communication skills.	• Skipping class: 15 minutes or later arrival to class without a note. • In the hallway during class without a pass (paper or digital). • Being anywhere in the building without permission.
6 Minor Infractions -5 (Automatic Detention)	**2 Major Infractions -15 (Automatic Detention)**
Distractions (D)	**Disrespect to Adults (DA)**
• Purposefully Being Loud • Purposefully Yawning/Burping • Any Inappropriate Noises	• Talking Back / Yelling at an Adult • Cursing Out an Adult • Walking away from an Adult
Talking (T)	**Disrespect to Community (DC)**
• Talking Out of Turn • Talking During Test • Excessive Volume	• Horseplaying • Disrupting Class Deliberately • Vandalizing School Property
Off Task (OT)	**Inappropriate Response (IR)**
• Not Following Directions • Disengaged • Misusing Resources	• Arguing • Sucking Teeth • Disrespectful Tone
Organization/Unprepared (O/U)	**Unprofessional (UP)**

• Unprepared, Unorganized • Out of Uniform • Late to Class	• Combing/Braiding Hair or Putting on Makeup • Sleeping in Class • Phone Rings in Class or on Inappropriate Website
	Failure to Comply (FC)
	• Slow Response to Directions • Repeatedly Not Following Directions • Not Completing Homework
	Out of Area (OA)
	• Skipping Class • In Hall Without Hall Pass • Being Anywhere in the Building Without Permission

Suspensions & Expulsion Procedures

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will carry out the discipline policy adopted by the Board of Directors post-authorization to govern the discipline procedures used with all scholars. Our discipline policy defines suspensions and expulsions in the following ways:

Suspensions. The option to suspend a scholar will be considered when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. A suspension is defined as any time a scholar is required to be removed from the instructional learning environment and not in attendance at school due to the display of challenging behaviors. To sustain a positive school culture and high behavioral expectations where everyone is known, loved and respected, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will suspend scholars from our school when there are breaches to our school Code of Conduct and high behavioral expectations. A scholar may be suspended by decision of the Proposed Executive Director (Years 1-5), and when the school is at full scale, by the School Principal in collaboration with Assistant Principals. The Board of Directors will receive notice of all suspensions data during our state-of-the-school data snapshots presented at monthly board meetings. Families will be notified immediately when a scholar has been issued an in-school suspension and/or an out-of-school suspension. After the scholar serves the out-of-school suspension, the scholar and family will be required to attend a scheduled school reentry meeting to continue collaboration and support with restorative practices that will set the scholars up for success as they return to the school environment. Key stakeholders, such as the Proposed Executive Director (replaced by the School Principal as hired), and Assistant Principals will attend school reentry meetings to ensure that everyone, including the scholar, is aligned with the high behavioral expectations moving forward.

We will also create a positive school culture that meets the needs of all scholars and their rights, especially for our scholars who receive prescribed services with an IEP, ILP, 504 Plan, tiered systems of support, and/or any other plans designed to support scholars where they are. We will implement the MTSS-Behavior framework to evaluate scholars' trends in challenging behavior and the impact it has on their academic progress.

Expulsions. The option to expel a scholar will always be our last resort when administering a consequence in response to a challenging behavior. Expulsions are the result of teachers and school leaders collaborating with scholars and families, and service providers, exhausting all efforts that the scholar has not responded to, such as but not limited to parental involvement, advisory support, school counseling, behavior improvement plans (BIP), Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), detentions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school- suspensions. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to expel a scholar whose challenging behaviors constitute endangerment to self, other scholars, and/or staff members. There is zero tolerance for the possession and/or use of a gun or deadly weapon on our school campus, which could harm scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members. We also reserve the right to expel a scholar for the possession, use of, and/or selling of alcohol or controlled substances of any kind while on the school campus. Scholars who have demonstrated challenging behaviors and/or open defiance towards authority that have led to multiple suspensions over time are also at risk of expulsion.

For a scholar to be expelled, the process must be initiated by the Proposed Executive Director to include discussions with the entire faculty, with a scheduled hearing to follow with the scholar and family. A scholar who is expelled will receive due process under Tennessee state law. At Novus SMART Academy (K-8), due process will include the following statement that is subject to legal review and the Board of Directors' approval: Novus SMART Academy (K-8) follows standard disciplinary policies and procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures. If the Proposed Executive Director believes expulsion is warranted, the scholar will be expelled. The Proposed Executive Director will also report any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons as outlined in TCA 39-17-1309 to the La Vergne and/or Smyrna Police Departments. Any decision to expel a

scholar will require the Board of Directors' approval, and families may, first, appeal the decision to the Proposed Executive Director before filing a grievance with the Board of Directors.

Appeals Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. Families reserve the right to appeal suspensions and/or expulsions within ten school days by submitting an appeals letter to the Proposed Executive Director of the school. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has the following procedure as a guide for families to appeal in the most effective manner:

4. The Proposed Executive Director sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the appeal submission.
5. The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
6. After listening to the appeal, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. Although there is an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Grievance Process of Suspensions and Expulsions. If families are still dissatisfied with the results of the appeal process with the Proposed Executive Director, they reserve the right to submit a grievance letter to the Board of Directors within ten days after meeting with the Proposed Executive Director and the Assistant Principal.

6. The Board Chair sets appointments with families within 48 hours of the grievance submission.
7. Members of the Board of Directors, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal meet with families to listen to their concerns about why they disagree with the suspension and/or expulsion.
8. After listening to the grievances of families, the Board Chair along with members of the Board of Directors present evidence-based data related to the incidents that led to the final decision for the suspension and/or expulsion. The Board of Directors is also able to ask clarifying questions that both the families and the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal can answer.
9. After the grievance hearing, the Board Chair lets families know that although there was an opportunity to negotiate the outcomes of the suspension and/or expulsion, the preponderance of evidence will be the deciding factor to determine whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.
10. Within 24 hours, families are notified by the Proposed Executive Director about the decision of the Board of Directors, whether the suspension and/or expulsion will be upheld, modified, or removed.

Code of Conduct

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will align its Code of Conduct to the Rutherford County Schools' Code of Conduct related to challenging behaviors, disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary options. Our school culture and high behavioral expectations will include restorative practices that allow scholars to contribute voice and choice through Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS), and we will incentivize scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and community members for modeling our Noble Core Values. This will happen by not lowering the bar of excellence, but by defending the bar of excellence with high-quality academic instruction and high behavioral expectations for all scholars. High behavioral expectations for all scholars means dismantling marginalized practices and replacing them, first, with the belief that all scholars can and will achieve success holistically with the appropriate support systems in place. We will reinforce our high behavioral expectations for every scholar and include structured opportunities to reinforce the desired outcomes we expect through their actions. Teachers and school leaders will practice emotional constancy in the spirit of being fair, firm and consistent, and to deliver consequences with minimal distractions to the sacredness of instructional time. To that end, redirecting challenging behaviors and/or delivering a consequence should not antagonize or embarrass scholars, regardless of the circumstances.

Our approach to school culture and high behavioral expectations will be included in our Scholar-Family Handbook, and translated for families in their home language. We have five levels for disciplinary procedures and options based on challenging behaviors that scholars may demonstrate in violation of our school culture and behavior system and follows (aligned to Rutherford County Schools Code of Conduct):

Level I Challenging Behaviors

This level includes minor challenging behaviors on the part of the scholar which impedes orderly classroom guidelines or interferes with the orderly operation of the school, but which can usually be handled by an individual teacher, school leader or staff member.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Classroom disturbances • Classroom tardiness • Cheating and lying • Abusive language • Failure to do assignments or carry out directions	• The staff member intervenes immediately. • The staff member determines what offense was	• Verbal reprimand • Special assignment • Restricting activities • Counseling • Withdrawal of privileges • Issuance of demerits

• Wearing, while on the grounds of a public school during the regular school day, clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment • Victimization of any student (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing)	committed and its severity. • The staff member determines who committed the offense and if he/she understands the nature of the offense. • The staff member employs appropriate disciplinary options. • The record of the offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the staff member.	• Strict supervised study • Detention • In-school suspension • Community service • Reteaching of expectations • Restorative practices • Behavior contract • Mediation • Mentoring
Level II Challenging Behaviors This level includes challenging behaviors whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. These behaviors do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but have educational consequences serious enough to require corrective action on the part of the school leadership team.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**
• Continuation of unmodified Level I challenging behaviors • School or class tardiness • School or class truancy • Using forged notes or excuses • Disruptive classroom behavior • Possession of a personal communication device when not authorized, if not drug related • Victimization of any scholar (hara	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation made by the staff member and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action and notifies the staff member of the action. • The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	• Teacher/schedule change • Mediation • Modified probation • Behavior modification programs • Peer counseling • Referral to outside agency • Transfer • Detention • Suspension from school-sponsored activities or from riding school bus • In-school suspension • Out-of-school suspension • Referral for MTSS-Behavior • Revision • Reteaching of expectations • Referral to Tier 2 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service
Level III Challenging Behaviors This level includes acts directly against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school.		
Behavior	**Disciplinary Procedures**	**Disciplinary Options**

• Continuation of unmodified Level I and II challenging behaviors • Fighting • Vandalism (minor) • Use, possession, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, or a non-THC vape product • Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia • Stealing • Threats to others (including staff) • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Elopement from classroom/school building • Possession of fireworks not deemed an explosive by law enforcement	• The scholar is referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal meets with the scholar and the staff member. • The principal hears the accusation and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The principal takes appropriate disciplinary action. • The principal may refer the incident to the Proposed Executive Director and make recommendations for consequences. • If the scholar's program is to be changed, adequate notice shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) of the charges against him, his/her right to appear at a hearing, and his/her right to be represented by a person of his/her choosing. • Any change in school assignment is appealable to the Board. • The record of offense and disciplinary action shall be maintained by the principal.	• In-school suspension • Detention • Restitution from loss, damage, or stolen property • Out-of-school suspension • Social adjustment classes • Transfer • Referral to Tier 2 or 3 behavioral supports • Restorative practices • Review and revision of a behavior plan • Behavior contract • Mentoring • Community Service • Development of a safety plan

Level IV Challenging Behaviors

This level of challenging behaviors include acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in the school. These acts are so serious that they usually require administrative actions which result in the immediate removal of the scholar from the school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities, and/or action by the Board of Directors. If a scholar's action poses a threat to the safety of others in the school, a teacher, school leader, or staff member may use reasonable force when necessary to prevent bodily harm or death to another person.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Continuation of unmodified Level I, II, and III behaviors • Death threats • Extortion • Vandalism • Theft/possession/sale of stolen property • Arson	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar. • The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar	• Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement • Long term out-of-school suspension

• Sexual misconduct not resulting in a charge deemed a zero tolerance in Policy 6.309. • Marketing/Possession/distribution/sale/transfer of any substance which is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size or markings to a controlled substance • Possession/use/sale/transfer of alcoholic beverages • Possession/distribution of any drug paraphernalia • Use/transfer of unauthorized substances • Victimization of any scholar (harassment (sexual, racial, ethnic, religious), bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing) • Off-campus criminal behavior that results in the scholar being legally charged and/or convicted with a felony or with what would have been a felony if the scholar were an adult, and the scholar's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or disrupts the educational process.	the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified. • Law enforcement officials are contacted. • The incident is reported, and recommendations are made to the Proposed Executive Director. • If the scholar's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.	• Expulsion up to one (1) year • Alternative schools • Other hearing authority or Board action which results in appropriate placement

Level V Challenging Behaviors

The below offenses have been deemed zero tolerance offenses under state law and by Rutherford County Schools Board Policy. Except offenses deemed reasoned judgment offenses, notated with an asterisk, the below offenses shall result in an expulsion for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year, subject to modification by the Proposed Executive Director on a case-by-case basis. Reasoned judgment offenses allow the principal to take into consideration intent and other factors to determine the appropriate level of discipline.

Behavior	Disciplinary Procedures	Disciplinary Options
• Unlawfully using or being under the influence of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Possessing unlawfully any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Sale/distribution/transfer of any narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug or any other controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug. • Possession of a firearm. • Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or a school resource officer. • Aggravated assault • Bomb threat • Threat of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity. • Possession of substances or devices deemed to be explosives by law enforcement • scholars charged with committing an on-campus violent felony listed in Board Policy 6.309 • Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons other than firearms.*	• The principal confers with appropriate staff members and with the scholar. • The principal hears the accusations and allows the scholar the opportunity to explain his/her conduct. • The parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified. • Law enforcement officials are contacted. • The incident is reported, and recommendations are made to the Proposed Executive Director. • If the scholar's placement is to be changed, adequate notice of the charges shall be given to the scholar and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and his/her right to appear at a hearing.	• For zero tolerance offenses, expulsion for no less than one (1) year. Scholars may make applications for modification to the Proposed Executive Director. • For reasoned judgment offenses marked with an asterisk: ○ Suspension ○ Remandment ○ Expulsion up to one (1) year, with ability to apply for modification.

• Possession/use/transfer of other instruments and substances with the intent to do harm to self or others or in a manner that renders the item dangerous.*		

Additional Guidelines

6. A principal shall not impose successive short-term suspensions that cumulatively exceed ten (10) days for the same offense.
7. A teacher or other school official shall not reduce or authorize the reduction of a scholar's grade because of discipline problems except in deportment or citizenship.
8. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on absences except as provided by Board Policy.
9. A scholar shall not be denied the passing of a course or grade promotion solely based on failure to…
10. Pay any activity fee;
    a. Pay a library or other school fine;
    b. Make restitution for lost or damaged school property.

Protecting the Rights of Scholars with Disabilities

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will fully support scholars with disabilities who struggle with challenging behaviors. Our support model is collaborative and inclusive of families in partnership with related services providers offered by the school as a continuum of services, and in some cases, professional services that have been solicited by families. As part of the individualized education plan (IEP) process, the IEP team will create a behavior intervention plan (BIP) driven by the results of the functional behavior assessment (FBA) as an intervention to address the challenging behaviors moving forward. The BIP will explicitly outline rewards and consequences the scholar will receive, and next steps to address new or recurring challenging behaviors should they surface**.** In the event a scholar with disabilities receives at least ten days of out-of-school suspension, the IEP team will meet to facilitate a manifestation determination review (MDR) to determine whether the behavior in question is a direct result of the scholar's disability. If it is determined that the behavior in question is a direct result of the scholar's disability, the IEP team will review the current IEP to determine next steps regarding additional support and services needed. If it is determined that the behavior in question is not a direct result of the scholar's disability, then the scholar may be disciplined in a manner that is comparable to a scholar who receives general education services.

Parent Participation. In accordance with the Rules of State Board of Education for Special Education Programs and Services, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will notify the families of scholars with a disability at least ten days before an IEP meeting to ensure that they have an opportunity to attend. MDR meetings will be held after a 24-hour notice has been issued to families as mandated in the Tennessee Rules of State Board of Education for parent participation (0520-01-09.15). When a scholar with disabilities returns to school, the services prescribed in the BIP based on the MDR will be provided to scholars immediately. These services ensure that scholars remain in their least restrictive learning environment, and continue to have access to high-quality academic instruction in the general education classroom where services are offered in an inclusive classroom environment.

Description of Individuals Responsible for Carrying out Discipline Policies

The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school, and will manage all tasks related to school culture and high behavioral expectations beginning in Year 1. The Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement will collaborate with the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access whenever there is a breach in school culture involving scholars who receive special education services. As the K-2 Assistant Principal, 3-5 Assistant Principal, and 6-8 Principal are added to the team, they will collaborate with the School Principal and Assistant Principal of School Culture and Community Engagement to uphold, reinforce, and oversee the discipline policies of the school. The school leadership team, which also includes the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will meet at least once weekly to discuss the academic, school culture, and school operations vision and goals of the school.

Informing Scholars and Parents. We will always communicate our discipline policy to families before the start of the school year, during our scholar and family orientations. Scholars and families will receive a copy of the Scholar-Family Handbook annually in their home language. In accordance with our grievance policy to be adopted by the Board of Directors, any complaints and comments regarding our school culture and high behavioral expectations, or regarding discipline actions or practices taken, will initially be addressed to and by the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal, or School Principal, as applicable. The Proposed Executive Director will also make decisions on revisions to the Scholar-Family Handbook as necessary and will submit those revisions to the Board of Directors for final review and approval. Modifications to the Scholar-Family Handbook can also be made based on feedback and the consensus of the Board of Directors before final review and approval, and then they will vote on the final iteration of the handbook to be used as the official school culture and discipline policy.

Bus Ridership Expectations

Scholars have the following expectations for bus ridership:

- Scholars must always remain seated in their assigned seats.
- Scholars must be respectful and report to their parents or a teacher, school leader, or staff member when they feel unsafe or disrespected.
- Scholars must keep their hands, feet, and all personal objects on their person and inside the bus at all times.
- Scholars must follow the Code of Conduct as if they are in the classroom. Bullying behavior will not be tolerated, and fighting, harassment, and any other challenging behaviors that create an unsafe environment are forbidden.

Uniform Policy

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) requires all scholars to wear a uniform in grades K-8. We have included in our budget for all new scholars to receive the required polo shirt and navy pants. The uniform guidelines are outlined in the chart below.

Uniform Item	Males	Females
Shirt	• Grades K-5: Green Polo Shirt w/ Novus SMART Academy (K-8) School Logo • Grades 6-8: Orange Polo Shirt w/ Novus SMART Academy (K-8) School Logo	
Bottom	Navy Blue Pants or Jumper Dress or Skirt	Navy Blue Pants
Socks	Solid Black or Brown or White or Navy Blue Socks	
Shoes	Solid Black or Brown or White or Navy Blue Closed-Toe Shoes	
Outerwear	Navy Blue Cardigan w/ Novus SMART Academy Logo (K-8) **Please Note:** The cardigan is optional; however, all other outerwear will be removed upon entrance and stored.	
Accessories	Small stud earrings only; 1 watch or 1 bracelet may be worn daily.	
Friday Attire	Novus SMART Academy (K-8) grade-level t-shirt with navy bottom; solid black or brown or white or navy blue socks; solid black or brown or white or navy blue closed-toe shoes; and cardigan (optional). **Please Note:** Scholars will have multiple opportunities to dress in their own clothes as they earn incentives and attend school events. These days are planned throughout the school year and include an explicit dress code policy.	

In the event a scholar comes to school out of uniform, the scholar will be given a clean article of clothing from the school's closet to borrow for the day before entering class. The family will be notified by phone of this occurrence and documented in PowerSchool as a uniform violation.

School Safety & Security

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) may take reasonable action against scholars and families for failure to follow school policies and procedures that may risk the safety and security of other scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff members, including withdrawal from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) by suspension or expulsion. Please refer to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Code of Conduct.

Visitor Policy

All visitors are required to check in at the front desk when entering our school campus. Visitors must present their state identification card to the Officer Manager or designee to be verified by our Visitor Management System that conducts background checks for all visitors. This system allows office staff to assess potential risks before granting access to the school. Once a visitor receives clearance from the Office Manager or designee to enter the school building, they must sign-in and report directly to the whereabouts of their visit. If a visitor does not receive clearance based on information presented in our Raptor school safety technology, the visitor will be asked to leave the school campus immediately. Refusal to leave the school campus will result in contacting school security for support. Visitors must also always wear a visitor's badge on a school lanyard around their necks during their school visits. Any visitors, including family members of scholars, who do not report to

the office or are found in the school building without authorization will be asked, first, to sign-in at the front desk and, second, to leave immediately when they are noncompliant. Refusal to leave will result in contacting school security for support.

Family Communication

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will always have clear systems and procedures for contacting scholars' families, in cases of emergency, illness, or challenging behavior requiring immediate family contact. Families should notify the school of any residential changes, phone number changes or emergency contact changes, or any family dynamics that may impact scholars' academic success or incite changes in behaviors. In case of an emergency, families should contact the Office Manager or designee by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should families contact scholars in their classrooms or attempt to withdraw scholars from the school building without notifying our school office.

Novus Noble Family Advisory Council

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will form a Novus Noble Family Advisory Council consisting of the Proposed Executive Director, at least one teacher per grade level, and at least two parents per grade level. The Novus Noble Family Advisory Council will meet at a minimum of once per quarter, and as often as once per month. The primary purpose of the council is to engage families of the school, create opportunities for families to be engaged often at the school, launch annual listening campaigns where the council actively seeks the input of families, and find ways to support and encourage the teachers in our school. At minimum, we ask all families to commit to the following:

- Annually review, sign, and meet the expectations of our Scholar-Family-School Commitments.
- Share concerns and support school decisions and policies;
- Support scholars at home in completing lifework, reading assignments, and any other school-related tasks.
- Actively communicate with scholars regarding academic results and behavioral progress, and communicate with the Council about concerns;
- Attend Noble Nights (family learning nights), Report Card Pick Ups, Scholar-led Conferences and any other requested meetings from the school to enhance the quality of learning.
- Return phone calls from the school.
- Communicate scholars' needs and changes in behavior for the school to effectively partner in monitoring character development.

Nondiscriminatory Policy

In accordance with T.C.A § 49-13-107(b)(9) and our mission to provide all scholars with access to a high-quality academic education, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) does not discriminate towards scholars and families who choose to enroll in our school as it relates to race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, English proficiency, or need for special education services or disability of any kind. All scholars deserve a high-quality academic instructional experience regardless of their present level of academic performance, behaviors and mindsets, socioeconomic status, and/or cultural backgrounds and differences.

Application Process

In compliance with TCA§49-13-113(b)(1), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will enroll any eligible scholar and family who applies, in a timely manner, to our school if there are seats available based on the capacity of our program, class sizes, grade level and/or building. Any scholar residing in Rutherford County, Tennessee is eligible for enrollment in our school. We accept applications for enrollment online, mail, or in-person for submission. The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) enrollment team will gather basic information from the application forms and transfer the information into our secure application database and student information system so that we may communicate with families about their enrollment status. We will maintain original applications until the following year's lottery process in case scholars are later enrolled. The application window will open on January 1st, and the application deadline will be January 31st at 5:00 pm.

Admissions Preferences

In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(A), if applications exceed the planned capacity of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the following preferences shall apply

4. Scholars attending public schools within the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, if those pupils would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus;
5. Scholars residing within the LEA service area in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located, but who are not enrolled in public schools, if those scholars would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus; and
6. Scholars residing outside the LEA in which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is located and whose needs would be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus.

In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(c), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to reserve up to ten percent (10%) or twenty-five seats, whichever is less, for preference of enrollment of scholars of teachers, sponsors, or member of governing body of the charter school if it is based on family choice and family submits a timely application. In alignment with T.C.A § 49-13-113(d), Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will give preference to siblings of a scholar who is already enrolled in the school.

Enrollment Process

Once admitted to the school, all families must complete and submit an enrollment packet that includes the following: Home Language Survey; enrollment forms; immunization records; transportation needs and preferences; and medical history documents. Registration requirements include two (2) proofs of residence, and Tennessee health certificates must be filled out by medical providers for all scholars entering kindergarten, grade seven, and any new scholars to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Medical physicals are required for all new scholars enrolling at Novus SMART Academy (K-8), and/or who want to participate in our sports programs. Kindergarten Eligibility: According to state law, scholars entering kindergarten must be five (5) years old on or before August 15, 2026 to enroll in kindergarten.

Lottery

In compliance with T.C.A § 49-13-113(b)(2)(B), if applications received for enrollment by the end of our application period whose qualifications meet the preferences stated above exceed our planned capacity, we will conduct a lottery that will be facilitated using PowerSchools' Unified Operations Enrollment system. The lottery will occur within fifteen (15) days of the close of application period, on/before February 20th, during which names will be randomly selected for each available seat. Within ten (10) days, notifications will be sent to scholars and families about the lottery via email and through the United States postal services. Scholars and families do not have to attend the lottery to be offered a seat at Novus SMART Academy (K-8). All scholars and families will be notified after the close of the lottery. Any scholar that does not secure a seat based on the lottery will be granted a space on the waitlist. Families will be notified by email and mail of their scholar's waitlist status at the same time as scholars are accepted into the school. Any scholar accepted from the waitlist will have one week from the date of acceptance to accept the available seat by submitting all required enrollment paperwork to the Office Manager. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) with respect to the publication of any list of scholars' names before, during or after the enrollment and lottery process.

Attachment G Cover Page

Articles of Incorporation

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

Division of Business Services
Department of State
State of Tennessee
312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL
Nashville, TN 37243-1102

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
7257 SANTEELAH WAY
ANTIOCH, TN 37013

September 25, 2023

Filing Acknowledgment

Please review the filing information below and notify our office immediately of any discrepancies.

Control # : 1467134 Status: Active
Filing Type: Nonprofit Corporation - Domestic

Document Receipt

Receipt # : 008379087	Filing Fee:	$20.00
Payment-Check/MO - BRYTEBRIDGE CONSULTING LLC, WINTER PARK, FL		$20.00

Amendment Type: Articles of Amendment
Filed Date: 09/25/2023 9:44 AM
Image # : B1452-6241

This will acknowledge the filing of the attached articles of amendment with an effective date as indicated above. When corresponding with this office or submitting documents for filing, please refer to the control number given above.

You must also file this document in the office of the Register of Deeds in the county where the entity has its principal office if such principal office is in Tennessee.

Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

Processed By: Jacqueline Krantz

Field Name	Changed From	Changed To
Filing Name	Novus Community Development	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Phone (615) 741-2286 * Fax (615) 741-7310 * Website: http://tnbear.tn.gov/

001467134

CHARTER
NONPROFIT CORPORATION

SS-4418

Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

Division of Business Services
Department of State
State of Tennessee
312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL
Nashville, TN 37243-1102
(615) 741-2286

Filing Fee: $100.00

For Office Use Only

-FILED-

Control # 001467134

The undersigned, acting as incorporator(s) of a nonprofit corporation under the provisions of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, adopt the following Articles of Incorporation.

1. The name of the corporation is: Novus Community Development

2. Name Consent: (Written Consent for Use of Indistinguishable Name)
☐ This entity name already exists in Tennessee and has received name consent from the existing entity.

3. This company has the additional designation of: None

4. The name and complete address of its initial registered agent and office located in the State of Tennessee is:
LEGALINC CORPORATE SERVICES INC.
STE 389
5865 RIDGEWAY CENTER PKWY
MEMPHIS, TN 38120-4032
SHELBY COUNTY

5. Fiscal Year Close Month: December **Period of Duration:** Perpetual

6. If the document is not to be effective upon filing by the Secretary of State, the delayed effective date and time is:
(none) (Not to exceed 90 days)

7. The corporation is not for profit.

8. Please complete all of the following sentences by checking one of the two boxes in each sentence:
This corporation is a ☑ public benefit corporation / ☐ mutual benefit corporation.
This corporation is a ☐ religious corporation / ☑ not a religious corporation.
This corporation will ☐ have members / ☑ not have members.

9. The complete address of its principal office is:
7257 SANTEELAH WAY
ANTIOCH, TN 37013
DAVIDSON COUNTY

(Note: Pursuant to T.C.A. §10-7-503 all information on this form is public record.)

31453-5226 09/18/2023 10:45 AM Received by Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett

CHARTER
NONPROFIT CORPORATION

SS-4418

Division of Business Services
Department of State
State of Tennessee
312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL
Nashville, TN 37243-1102
(615) 741-2286

Filing Fee: $100.00

Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

For Office Use Only

Control # 001467134

The name of the corporation is: Novus Community Development

10. The complete mailing address of the entity (if different from the principal office) is:
7257 SANTEELAH WAY
ANTIOCH, TN 37013

11. List the name and complete address of each incorporator:

Title	Name	Business Address	City, State, Zip
Incorporator	Jeremy Sager	7257 SANTEELAH WAY	ANTIOCH, TN 37013

12. School Organization: (required if the additional designation of "School Organization - Exempt" is entered in section 3.)

☐ I certify that pursuant to T.C.A. §49-2-611, this nonprofit corporation is exempt from the $100 filing fee required by T.C.A. §48-51-303(a)(1).

☐ This nonprofit corporation is a "school support organization" as defined in T.C.A. §49-2-603(4)(A).

☐ This nonprofit corporation is an educational institution as defined in T.C.A. §48-101-502(b).

13. Insert here the provisions regarding the distribution of assets upon dissolution:
See Attached.

14. Other Provisions: See attached.

(Note: Pursuant to T.C.A. §10-7-503 all information on this form is public record.)

Electronic	Incorporator
Signature	Title/Signer's Capacity
Jeremy Sager	Sep 18, 2023 10:45AM
Printed Name	Date

Document 2023091800145 Received by Tennessee Secretary of State

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

TO

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

Novus Community Development

DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or state or local government for public purpose.

OPERATION PROVISION

The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in, any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to charitable purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person.

Attachment H Cover Page

Proof of Non-Profit and Tax-Exempt Status

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service
Tax Exempt and Government Entities
P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

NOVUS SMART ACADEMY K-8
7257 SANTEELAH WAY
ANTIOCH, TN 37013

Date:
04/02/2024
Employer ID number:
93-3712729
Person to contact:
Name: D. Emmanuel
ID number: 103808081
Telephone: 877-829-5500
Accounting period ending:
December 31
Public charity status:
170(b)(1)(A)(ii)
Form 990 / 990-EZ / 990-N required:
Yes
Effective date of exemption:
September 9, 2023
Contribution deductibility:
Yes
Addendum applies:
No
DLN:
26053679005193

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

Information for Charter Schools
You're not subject to the specific publishing requirements of Revenue Procedure 75-50, 1975-2 C.B., page 587, as long as you operate under a contract with the local government. If your method of operation changes to the extent that your charter is terminated, cancelled or not renewed, you should notify us. You'll also be required to comply with Revenue Procedure 75-50.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

Letter 947 (Rev. 2-2020)
Catalog Number 35152P

Attachment I Cover Page

By-laws

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

By-laws of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
A Not-for-Profit Corporation
Incorporated Under the Laws of the State of Tennessee

ARTICLE I: NAME AND OFFICES

Section 1.1 Name. The name of the organization is Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Section 1.2 Principal Office. The initial principal office of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be located at 7257 Santeelah Way, Antioch, Tennessee 37013.

Section 1.3 Registered Office. The initial registered office of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall be 7257 Santeelah Way, Antioch, Tennessee 37013. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) may also have offices at such other places as its Board of Directors shall determine the business of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) required, provided, however, that the registered office shall be registered with the Secretary of State of Tennessee and the agent so registered shall be located at the same address, or as otherwise provided by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND DISSOLUTION

Section 2.1 Purpose. The purpose for which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is organized is to establish and run a public charter school in Rutherford, County, Tennessee, pursuant to the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002, as amended, supplemented or replaced, ("The Charter Schools Act"), under its Charter Agreement with Rutherford County Schools and Rutherford County, Tennessee (the "Charter Agreement"), with a stated mission of providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has been organized as stated in the Certificate of Incorporation, which may be amended as required. No part of the net earnings of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause hereof.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Section 2.2 Dissolution. If, for any reason, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) should dissolve, organization assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

ARTICLE III: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall have all powers and duties for the conduct of the activities of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall not have members. While persons who associate with, or attend programs of, participate in, contribute to, or benefit from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) may be referred to as "members," no rights, voting or otherwise, will inure to any such persons.

Section 3.1 General Powers. The Board of Directors shall have the power to govern the business, affairs, and property of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the state of Tennessee and any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation or these By-laws. The Proposed Executive Director will be an advisory, non-voting member of the Board (*ex officio*). As required by law (currently, TCA § 49-13-104), the Board shall contain at least one (1) parent representative whose child is currently enrolled in Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The parent representative shall be appointed by the Board of Directors within six (6) months of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s opening date.

Section 3.2 Management of the Corporation. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall be managed by the Board of Directors, which shall consist of at least seven (7) Directors and no more than eleven (15) Directors.

Section 3.3 Qualifications. Members of the Board of Directors shall be at least eighteen years of age and will be selected based on:

1. Their belief in the purpose of public charter schools and in the mission of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
2. Their belief that *all* children can achieve the highest levels of academic excellence.
3. Their availability to participate meaningfully in the success of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) over time.
4. Their ability to demonstrate expertise in Board Governance, Commercial Real Estate, Community Service/Outreach, DEI, Education (Academics/Curricula), Facilities (Logistics/Operations), Finance, Fundraising and Grant Writing, Legal Expertise as an Attorney, Management and Organizational Experience, Marketing, Parent and Community Involvement, Personnel/Human Capital, Public Relations, Strategic Planning, or Technology.

Section 3.4 Compensation. Members of the Board of Directors shall serve without compensation; however, The following guidelines will be applied to all matters regarding compensation:

1. A voting member of the Board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
2. A voting member of any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
3. No voting member of the Board or any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8), either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Section 3.5 Selection of Directors. The Governance Committee shall present potential Directors for election by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall approve a process for nominating Directors to the Board of Directors through the Governance Committee, and there will be annual meetings dedicated to the selection of nominated Directors.

Section 3.6 Terms of Directors. Directors shall serve staggered terms to balance continuity with new perspectives. Directors shall serve a term of three (3) years from the date of their appointments, or until their successors are seated. A full three (3) year term shall be considered to have been served upon the passage of three (3) annual meetings following elections. After election, the term of a Director may not be reduced, except for cause as specified in these By-laws. No Director shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms.

Section 3.7 Initial Board. The initial Board of Directors will serve staggered terms. The initial Board shall consist of at least one (1) Director who will serve a one (1) year term, at least three (3) Directors who will serve a two (2) year term, and at least three (3) Directors who will serve a three (3) year term.

Section 3.8 Newly Created Directorships and Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors and any position to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Directors may be filled, upon recommendation of a qualified candidate by the Governance Committee, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the seated Directors. A Director elected to fill the vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of their predecessor in office.

Section 3.9 Removal of Directors. Any or all the Directors may be removed for cause by action of the Board of Directors. Directors may be removed due to non-fulfillment of duties required by the Board of Directors, misconduct, theft and misrepresentation of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), all by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 3.10 Resignation of Directors. A Director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board Chair. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by the Board Chair, and the acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Section 3.11 Action of the Board. Unless otherwise required by law, the vote of a majority of the Board of Directors' present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is present at such time, shall be the act of the Board. Each Director present shall have one vote.

Section 3.12 Members of the Board.

1. Shall receive no payment of honoraria, except reimbursement for expenses incurred in performance of voluntary Novus SMART Academy (K-8) activities in accordance with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) policies.
2. Shall serve with the highest degree of duty, loyalty, and care and shall undertake no enterprise to profit personally from their position with Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
3. Shall be bound by the Board's Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy statements.

4. Shall have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets or lease of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Any Director who individually or as part of a business or professional firm is involved in the business transactions or current professional services of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall disclose this relationship and shall not participate in any vote taken with respect to such transactions or services.
5. Shall be covered with Officers Insurance provided by Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in amounts required by the Board in its reasonable discretion.

ARTICLE IV: BOARD MEETINGS

Section 4.1 Regular Meetings. There shall be at least ten (10) regular meetings of the Board of Directors held each year. Notice shall be given to each Director thirty (30) days prior to the date of every regular meeting of the Board. Notice of any meeting to the public shall include the date, time, and location, and a statement or agenda specifying the nature of business to be conducted. The meetings of the Board are deemed to be "public business" and must be held in compliance with TCA §§ 8-44-101 *et seq.*

Section 4.2 Regular Meetings Notices. Notice of all regular meetings of the Board, an agenda of all items to be discussed at such meetings, and agenda support materials shall be circulated to all Directors prior to the meeting. Any Director may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of a Director at any meeting also shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where the Director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

Section 4.3 Annual Meetings. Annual meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held in the last quarter of the fiscal year.

Section 4.4 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Board Chair or by a majority of the Board filing a written request for such a meeting with the Board Chair and stating the object, date, and hour therefore, due notice having been given to each Director five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting. Notice of any meeting to the public shall include the date, time, and location, and a statement or agenda specifying the nature of business to be conducted. Such notice shall also comply with the requirements regarding the posting and notice of meetings to the public, pursuant to TCA §§ 8-44-101 *et seq.*

Section 4.5 Quorum of Directors. Unless otherwise provided in the certificate of incorporation, a majority of the entire Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business or any specified item of business.

Section 4.6 Meeting Minutes. Minutes of each meeting of the Board of Directors shall be recorded in writing by the Board Secretary and kept with the records of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The contents of such minutes, as well as the provisions for providing the minutes to the public, shall comply with the provisions of TCA §§ 8-44-101 *et seq.*

Section 4.7 Open Meetings. Meetings of the Board shall be public in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Members of the public shall have an opportunity for input at meetings of the Board.

Section 4.8 Board Chair. The Board Chair, along with the Proposed Executive Director or Vice Chair or chosen representative on the Board, shall attend all Board and 23tings.

Section 4.9 Absentee Board Member. An absentee Board member may not designate an alternate to represent their person at a Board meeting. A member of the Board may be deemed to be present for purposes of achieving a quorum and may cast a vote if they grant a signed, written proxy to another Board member who is present at the meeting. The proxy must direct a vote to be cast with respect to a particular proposal that is described with reasonable specificity in the proxy. No other proxies are allowed.

Section 4.10 Location of Board Meetings. The Board of Directors may hold its meetings at the office of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) or at such other places, either within or without the state, as it may from time to time determine.

ARTICLE V: BOARD OFFICERS

Section 5.1 Board Officers. The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Board of Directors shall have four (4) Board Officers as follows: Board Chair, Board Vice Chair, Board Treasurer, and Board Secretary. Initially, the Board Chair and Board Treasurer will be appointed by the Proposed Executive Director in collaboration with Erline Hertilien, our BES Senior Director of Leadership Development and Board Governance Coach.

Board Officers shall have such duties, powers, and functions as hereinafter provided. Each Board Officer shall hold office for the term for which the Director is elected or appointed and until the successor has been elected or appointed and qualified.

1. The Board Chair is the senior volunteer leader of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and appointed as Chair for the Governance Committee, presiding at all meetings of the Board of Directors and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex officio member of all committees of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The Board Chair oversees implementation of Board and school policies and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained.
2. The Vice Chair is the secondary volunteer leader of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair including sharing responsibilities as appropriate.

3. The Board Treasurer is a volunteer leader who provides direction for the financial management of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and facilitates the Board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities, appointed as Chair for the Finance Committee.
4. The Board Secretary is a volunteer leader who provides direction for the keeping of legal documents including minutes of all Board meetings.

Section 5.2 Election of Board Officers. The Governance Committee shall present potential Officers to the Board of Directors. The nominated Officers shall be drawn from among the members of the Board of Directors. The election of Officers shall be held at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 5.3 Tenure. The newly elected Board Officers shall take office on July 1 following the close of the meeting at which they are elected and the term of office shall be one year, or until the respective successor assumes office. A Director may serve more than one (1) term in the same office, but not more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 5.4 Board Chair Vacancy. If the office of the Board Chair becomes vacant, the Board Vice Chair shall become Board Chair for the unexpired portion of the term. If the Board Vice Chair, Board Treasurer, or Board Secretary offices become vacant, the Board Chair shall appoint interim Board Officers to fill such vacant offices until a scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors can be held.

Section 5.5 Removal or Resignation. Any Board Officer elected or appointed by the Board may be removed by the Board with or without cause. In the event of the death, resignation, or removal of an officer, the Board in its discretion, may elect or appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term. Offices may not be held by the same person.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Section 6.1 Composition. A Board resolution shall appoint committees or task forces of the Board, except the Governance Committee. Committees may be composed of Directors or community members, or both, except for the Governance Committee which shall be composed only of Board members. The Board may prescribe the need and/or the composition of such committees.

Section 6.2 Academics Committee. The purpose of the Academics Committee is to work with the Proposed Executive Director to define academic achievement, ensure that all Board members know the charter promises made to the community and the authorizer, and to devise clear and consistent measures to monitor enrollment, student demographics, and achievement of academic outcomes. Appointments of the Academics Chair shall be made annually by the Board Chair with the advice and consent of the Board and the Proposed Executive Director, composed of at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair and elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. Additional committee members may be appointed and need not be members of the Board of Directors. It is anticipated that given the nature of this committee it may be beneficial to have outside academic leaders on the committee. The duties of the Academics Committee shall be to:

1. Define and continue to refine what academic achievement means for Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
2. Ensure that all Board members understand the key charter promises we have made to our community and to Rutherford County Schools.
3. Work with the Proposed Executive Director and school leadership team to devise clear and consistent ways to measure progress towards stated goals.
4. Work with the Proposed Executive Director and school leadership team to set annual academic achievement goals, to be presented to and approved by the full Board.
5. Work with the Proposed Executive Director and school leadership team to share with the Board annual successes, barriers to reaching academic achievement, and strategies to overcome these barriers.
6. Arrange for Board training on issues related to academic oversight and academic achievement, as needed.
7. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
8. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on the same to the Board of Trustees.
9. Report to the Board of Trustees at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Section 6.3 Development Committee. The purpose of the Development Committee is to ensure that the organization's total development program is in concert with the organization's strategic direction and needs. The Committee serves as the mechanism by which Board members and other volunteers are involved in the fundraising process. This committee shall be composed of at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair and elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. Appointments of the Chair and members of the Development Committee shall be made annually by the Chair of the Board with the advice and consent of the Board and the Proposed Executive Director. Additional committee members may be appointed and need not be members of the Board of Directors. Given the nature of this Committee, it may be beneficial to have volunteers from the community who have access to resources and/or people and organizations with resources that can benefit the school and/or other skills that can strengthen the effectiveness of the Development Committee. The duties of the Development Committee shall be to:

1. Work with the staff to develop the organization's fundraising plan.
2. Ensure that the case for support is strong, current, and based on the organization's mission and goals; and distinguishes the organization from others in the field.

3. Develop policies, plans, procedures, and schedules for Board involvement in fundraising.
4. Helps educate Board members about the organization's plans and the resources needed to realize those plans.
5. Help educate Board members about environmental factors affecting fundraising among the organization's constituencies (e.g., current events, other organizations' activities, economic factors).
6. Familiarize Board members with fundraising skills and techniques so that they are comfortable soliciting contributions on behalf of their organization.
7. Set guidelines for Board members' contributions and then solicit those contributions.
8. Play a strong role in identifying, cultivating, and approaching major donors (e.g., individual and planned gifts, foundation, and corporate).

Section 6.4 Finance Committee. The purpose of the Finance Committee is to work with the Proposed Executive Director to create the upcoming fiscal year budget and recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the organization's assets. The members of the Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer of the Board who shall serve as Chair, the Board Chair who shall serve as an ex-officio member, and at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair and elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The duties of the Finance Committee shall be to:

1. Review, and recommend to the Board for approval, an annual budget for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director.
2. Also in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director, review and recommend to the Board for approval and annually revise a three-year financial forecast and long range financial plans based on the forecast.
3. Review grant proposals when required by funders, and when necessary, recommend action by the Board.
4. Review all non-budgeted expenditures over a set dollar amount to be determined by the Board and recommend action to the Board.
5. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
6. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on the same to the Board of Directors.
7. Arrange for an annual audit with submission of the same to the Board.
8. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Section 6.5 Governance Committee. The purpose of the Governance Committee is to build and maintain an effective Board for Novus SMART Academy (K-8). The Governance Committee will be chaired by the Board Chair and shall be composed of at least three (3) persons recommended by the Chair and elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The duties of the Governance Committee shall be to:

1. Establish and drive a continuous improvement process to help the Board and individual Directors to become more valuable as strategic assets of the school, contributing to long-term success.
2. Review the structure and size of the Board and the Board committees. Periodically, review with the Board the appropriate skills and characteristics required on the Board in keeping with the strategic direction of the charter school.
3. Identify and consider candidates for Board membership. On behalf of the Board, assess alignment with the school's mission and vision and the skills and experience of prospective Board members. Present strong candidates to the full Board for consideration.
4. Review the institutional and other affiliations of Board members and Board candidates for possible conflicts of interest. Investigate any potential conflict of interest involving a Board member and make a recommendation to the Board for resolution.
5. Keep up to date on developments in the charter school governance field. Annually review and assess the charter school governance practices of the Board and recommend any proposed changes to the Board for approval.
6. Plan Board education including new member orientation, education of Board members, and Board retreats.
7. Plan training and education of the Board related to governance roles and responsibilities and with respect to bridging Board knowledge gaps.
8. Conduct assessment/evaluation of the Board, the Board Chair, individual Directors, including each Director's self-assessment, and Board meetings/sessions.
9. Evaluate and monitor governance structures and processes, including policy development and processes for Board monitoring/oversight of operations.
10. Identify leadership development opportunities for existing and potential Board members to maximize member's contributions.

Section 6.6 Quorum for Committees. There shall be no quorum requirement for any committee.

ARTICLE VII: FISCAL YEAR AND SIGNING CHECKS

Section 7.1 Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall begin on July 1 of each calendar year and terminate on June 30 of the following year.

Section 7.2 Signing Checks. The signature of both the Proposed Executive Director and Board Treasurer shall be required on any check more than $15,000.

ARTICLE VIII: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All Directors, Officers, and employees of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall be subject to the Conflict of Interest Agreement. If there be any conflict of interest between the provisions of the certificate of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and these By-laws, the provisions of the certificate of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall govern.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

These By-laws may be adopted, amended, or repealed by the Board at the time they are entitled to vote in the election of Directors. By-laws may also be adopted, amended, or repealed by the Board of Directors, but any By-law adopted, amended or repealed by the Board may be amended by the Board members entitled to vote thereon as herein before provided. If any By-law regulating an impending election of Directors is adopted, amended or repealed by the Board, there shall be set forth in the notice of the next meeting of all Board members for the election of Directors the By-law so adopted, amended or repealed, together with a concise statement of the changes made.

ARTICLE X: CONDUCT

Because of its strong beliefs in high moral standards based on traditional values, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to expect from all of its Board Of Directors and Board Officers to maintain high moral standards and social values that do not conflict with the mission of providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society. In the event of conduct that presents a conflict or challenge, the rules of order in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all meetings of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

ARTICLE XI: INDEMNITY

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall indemnify each member of the Board of Directors to the full extent permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. Each member of the Board of Directors shall receive the protection and immunity provided by TCA § 48-58-601, as (and if) limited by The Charter School Act. A member of the Board of Directors, or its Board Officers, shall not be personally liable to Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for damages for breach of any duty owed to Novus SMART Academy (K-8), its beneficiaries, or the Board of Directors, except that nothing contained herein shall relieve a Board of Directors or Board Officer from liability for breach of duty based on an act or omission: (a) in breach of such person's duty of loyalty to the Novus SMART Academy (K-8); (b) not in good faith or involving a known violation of the law; or (c) resulting in receipt of an improper personal benefit.

Board Member Code of Conduct

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Code of Conduct of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Board of Directors will operate in the most ethical and conscientious manner and in accordance to Article X of our By-laws that reads as follows:

> Because of its strong beliefs in high moral standards based on traditional values, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) reserves the right to expect from all of its Board Of Directors and Board Officers to maintain high moral standards and social values that do not conflict with the mission of providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society. In the event of conduct that presents a conflict or challenge, the rules of order in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all meetings of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

All members of the Board of Directors and its Board Officers agree to the following Code of Conduct:

1. Recognize the authority of the Board of Directors rests only with the Board as a whole and not with individual members of the Board and act accordingly.
2. Ensure, uphold, and abide by all laws, regulations, and rules pertaining to schools issued by the Tennessee State Board of Education, the authorizer, the courts, and any other relevant authority.
3. Support the delegation of authority for the day-to-day administration of the charter school to the Proposed Executive Director and act accordingly.
4. Ensure and enact decision-making grounded on the educational welfare and wellbeing of the children served by Novus SMART Academy (K-8) without consideration to race, religion, color, sex, income level, or any other irrelevant characteristic.
5. Ensure and encourage changes only through lawful and ethical processes with use of independent judgment in reaching all final decisions.
6. Refrain from using their position on the Board of Directors for personal gain or profit.
7. Periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and policies in place and collaborate with other Board members to establish effective programs and policies for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) moving forward.
8. Make decisions on programs and policy matters only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings.
9. Attend and participate in regular meetings, annual meetings, and special meetings to express opinions before votes are cast, and after the Board vote, abide by and support all majority decisions of the Board of Directors.
10. Comply with the Conflict of Interest Policy of the Board, all applicable laws, and State Board of Education standards, rules, and guidelines.
11. Exhibit personal and professional conduct that reflects positively on Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
12. Make all reasonable efforts to support our mission of providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society.

Attachment K Cover Page

Conflict of Interest Policy

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST OF NOVUS SMART ACADEMY (K-8)
A Not-for-Profit Corporation
Incorporated Under the Laws of the State of Tennessee

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s interest when contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a Board Officer or Director of the organization, or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

ARTICLE II: DEFINITIONS

Section 2.1. Interested Person. Any Director, Board Officer, or member of a Committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

Section 2.2 Financial Interest. A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has a transaction or arrangement,
2. A compensation arrangement with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) or with any entity or individual with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.
4. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate Board or Committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

ARTICLE III: PROCEDURES

Section 3.1 Duty to Disclose. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Directors and members of Committees with Board-delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

Section 3.2 Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the Board or Committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or Committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists. Notwithstanding anything herein, a conflict of interest shall not exist and no review or action by any Board or Committee shall be necessary for one or more grants in an aggregate amount of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000) or less in any single calendar year, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to an organization that is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, where a financial interest as described herein exists.

Section 3.3 Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

5. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board or Committee meeting, but after the presentation, the interested person shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
6. The Board Chair in collaboration with the Committee Chair shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or Committee member to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
7. After exercising due diligence, the Board or Committee shall determine whether Novus SMART Academy (K-8) 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.
8. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing conflict of interest, the Board or Committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'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 the transaction or arrangement.

Section 3.4 Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

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

ARTICLE IV: RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

The minutes of the Board and all Committees with Board-delegated powers shall contain:

1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or Committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
2. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

ARTICLE V: COMPENSATION

Members of the Board of Directors shall serve without compensation; however, The following guidelines will be applied to all matters regarding compensation:

1. A voting member of the Board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
2. A voting member of any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8) for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
3. No voting member of the Board or any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Novus SMART Academy (K-8), either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

ARTICLE VI: ANNUAL STATEMENTS

Each Director, Board Officer and member of a Committee with Board-delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

1. Has received a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy,
2. Has read and understands the policy,
3. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
4. Understands that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is charitable, and to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

ARTICLE VII: PERIODIC REVIEWS

To ensure Novus SMART Academy (K-8) operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
2. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurnment, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

ARTICLE VIII: USE OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Conflict of Interest Defined. For purposes of this policy, the following circumstances shall be deemed to create Conflicts of Interest:

Section 8.1 Outside Interests.

1. A Contract or Transaction between Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and a Responsible Person or Family Member.
2. A Contract or Transaction between Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and an entity in which a Responsible Person or Family Member has a Material Financial Interest or of which such person is a Director, Board Officer, agent, partner, associate, trustee, personal representative, receiver, guardian, custodian, conservator or other legal representative.

Section 8.2 Outside Activities.

1. A Responsible Person competing with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in the rendering of services or in any other Contract or Transaction with a third party.
2. Responsible Persons having a Material Financial Interest in; or serving as a Director, Board Officer, employee, agent, partner, associate, trustee, personal representative, receiver, guardian, custodian, conservator or other legal representative of, or consultant to; an entity or individual that competes with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in the provision of services or in any other Contract or Transaction with a third party.

Section 8.3 Gifts, Gratuities, and Entertainment. A Responsible Person accepting gifts, entertainment or other favors from any individual or entity that:

1. Does or is seeking to do business with, or is a competitor of Novus SMART Academy (K-8); or
2. Has received, is receiving or is seeking to receive a loan or grant, or to secure other financial commitments from Novus SMART Academy (K-8);
3. Under circumstances where it might be inferred that such action was intended to influence or possibly would influence the Responsible Person in the performance of his or her duties. This does not preclude the acceptance of items of nominal or insignificant value or entertainment of nominal or insignificant value which are not related to any transaction or activity of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

ARTICLE IX: REVIEW OF POLICY

1. Each new Responsible Person shall be required to review a copy of this policy and to acknowledge in writing that he/she has done so.
2. Each Responsible Person shall annually complete a disclosure form identifying any relationships, positions or circumstances in which the Responsible Person is involved that he or she believes could contribute to a Conflict of Interest arising. Such relationships, positions or circumstances might include service as a director of or consultant to a nonprofit organization, or ownership of a business that might provide goods or services to Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Any such information regarding business interests of a Responsible Person or a Family Member shall be treated as confidential and shall generally be made available only to the Board Chair, the Proposed Executive Director, and any Committee Chair appointed to address Conflicts of Interest, except to the extent additional disclosure is necessary in connection with the implementation of this Policy.
3. This policy shall be reviewed annually by each member of the Board of Directors. Any changes to the policy shall be communicated immediately to all Responsible Persons.
4. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Conflict of Interest reporting form is shown below.

Conflict of Interest Information Form
Name: _____ **Date:** _____
Please describe below any relationships, positions, or circumstances in which you are involved that you believe could contribute to a Conflict of Interest (as defined in Novus SMART Academy (K-8) 's Policy on Conflicts of Interest) arising. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
I hereby certify that the information set forth above is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have reviewed, and agree to abide by, the Conflict of Interest Policy established by Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Attachment L Cover Page

Board Member Resumes or Biographies

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

BB

Brian Bradshaw

Nashville, TN 37135

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Accomplished Executive Director recognized for leveraging strong team leadership and development to drive forward progress. Highly organized, detail-oriented leader skilled in directing high-performing teams to develop solutions and solve operational and technical problems. Success implementing systems across multiple operations with superior organizational and communication skills.

SKILLS

- Business Planning
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Training and Development
- Operational Standards
- Business Administration
- Public Speaking
- Operational Efficiency
- Church Programming
- Communications Strategies
- Project Management
- Corporate Communications
- Organizational Systems
- Campus Operations
- Business Operations
- Leadership Development

WORK HISTORY

ASSOCIATE PASTOR/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *07/2021 to CURRENT*

Mt. Zion Baptist Church | Nashville, TN

- Zion Baptist church, Nashville, Tn
- Manage external affairs and ministry programming.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with local and non-local organizations, industry regulators and other relevant parties.
- Operate within the community on behalf of the Senior Pastor and organization.
- Collaborate with Executive team to identify, create and implement strategic plans to actualize business objectives.
- Identify training opportunities for department employees and manage strategic business function.
- Manage company departmental and ministerial operations to ensure business and ministry practices comply with regulatory and legal requirements.
- Oversee all ministry programming and services to actualize desire company presentations.
- Develop organizational culture and promote transparency and collaboration throughout the organization.
- Represent the company at ministry, social and corporate events.
- Manage departmental employees, release of documents and information to staff pertaining to performance appraisals, reports proposals and other important and sensitive information.
- Manage and provided analysis of departmental budget and expenditures.

DECISION WRITER *09/2010 to 07/2021*

United States Federal Government | Franklin, TN

- Office of Hearings Operations and Appeals
- Formulate and draft legally sufficient decisions through research of OHO rules and regulations.
- Perform comprehensive analysis of claim records for appeal cases.
- Write decisions based on Administrative Law Judges directions and findings.
- Provide rationale for weight given to evidence for legal decisions.
- Identify conflicts in evidence and resolve to be upheld on appeal and recommend action.
- Advise Administrative Law Judges about special issues for all cases.
- Organize and prioritize work under strict deadlines in a fast-paced environment.
- Work with individuals of diverse backgrounds
- Work with individuals in routine and complex situations
- Proofread pre-employment information to ensure accuracy.
- Assisted with coordination and transfer into acquired office space.
- Assisted with ensuring all staff received and signed all personnel documents.
- Created reports and spreadsheets to maintain record of budget allocations, purchased equipment and supplies.
- Assisted with release of documents and information to staff pertaining to performance appraisals, reports proposals and other important and sensitive information.
- Provided analysis of budget expenditures and equipment purchases

SENIOR MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE *07/2009 to 09/2010*

Verizon Wireless Corporation | Franklin, TN

- Verizon wireless
- Promoted company marketing and campaign initiatives through company internet, mail, and media.
- Maintained maintenance and analysis of company data.
- Daily operations of computer-based systems with various software programs
- Maintained customer and corporate company relationships by providing customer service on company software systems.
- Worked with individuals of diverse backgrounds to obtain information in routine and complex situations.
- Handled and controlled complex situations when working with company terminology and policies and procedures.
- Independently researched personnel and technical issues concerning company policies and procedures.
- Resolved and corrected discrepancies in day-to-day situations
- Prepared purchase orders for consumers of company products

- Reviewed legal contracts of company guidelines and products to consumers.

DIRECTOR *05/2007 to 07/2009*

Murfreesboro City Schools | Murfreesboro, TN

- Murfreesboro city schools
- Hired licensed and non-licensed staff.
- Trained licensed and non-licensed staff on district policy, procedures.
- Financial fiscal management of yearly budget
- Analyzed and projected all budget expenditures for site and grants.
- Point of contact for all financial school contracts and budgeting balances on accounts
- Managed student and staff retention plan
- Led development and writing of grant curriculum for federal funding.
- Director of Public Relations
- Provided leadership and model training for maintenance of appropriate standards.
- Approved student state funded grant tuition based upon household income and assistance.
- Maintained administrative records for Board of Education and State of Tennessee
- Experience in the interpreting and applying legal terminology of school policies to non-licensed staff.
- Maintained compliance of State of Tennessee audits
- Created and implemented in-house administration correspondence and organization.

EDUCATION

Master of Divinity | Divinity *05/2021*

Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN

Bachelor of Science | Mass Communications *12/2008*

Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATTIONS

- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Incorporated

ANDREA COLEMAN

acoleman5@me.com

9014933644

Nashville, TN 37013

SKILLS

- Student Achievement
- Program Development and Management
- G Suite & Microsoft Office Suite
- Training and Development
- School Administration
- Learning Management Systems
- Staff Development
- Data Analysis
- Curriculum Development
- Group Facilitation and Presentations

EDUCATION

Arkansas State University
State University, AR • 08/2017

Educational Specialist : Educational Leadership

Grand Canyon University
Phoenix, AZ • 03/2012

Master of Arts: Curriculum And Instruction: Technology

University of Phoenix
Phoenix • 12/2011

Master of Arts: Special Education- Cross Categorical

Tennessee State University
Nashville, TN • 05/2008

Bachelor of Science: Interdisciplinary Studies

CERTIFICATIONS

- ILL Administrator- Beginning Administrator, Pre K-12
- Professional License- Special Education Modified, K-12

WORK HISTORY

Metro Nashville Public Schools - Special Education Teacher
Nashville, TN • 07/2024- Present

- Case manages 13 students
- Creates and manages IEPs to define student learning objectives and educational strategies, in addition to applying instructional knowledge and methods to support goals.
- Accommodates general education curriculum for special-needs students using various instructional techniques and technologies

Rocketship Public Schools - Academic Intervention Lead
Nashville, TN • 08/2023- June 2024

- ESSA funded position, to conclude at the end of the 2023-24 school year
- Coached tier II reading intervention, to include a team of 8 interventionists
- Managed the MTSS and SST process
- Coached and managed special education department, to include a team of 9 paraprofessionals and 1 specialist
- Sole case manager for the entire department to include 36 students
- Created and facilitated weekly professional development for entire school team
- Facilitated ongoing informal observations and formal evaluations

RePublic Schools - Assistant Principal for Culture & Dean of Students
Nashville, TN • 06/2019 - May 2023

- Turnaround school leader who served on the school-based leadership team to lead Nashville Prep to become a Level 5 Reward School for the 2021-2022 school year
- Developed and executed a framework for coaching for teachers based on TLAC techniques
- Managed school-wide yearly culture budget of +$10,000 in collaboration with operations team for scholar and staff incentives and supplies
- Designed Key Performance Indicator (KPI) spreadsheets and models to aggregate school-wide data for attendance, academics, and behavior
- Created training materials and facilitated school-wide professional development for 28 teachers

Lead Public Schools - Exceptional Education Coordinator
Nashville, TN • 10/2017 - 05/2019

- Turnaround school leader who served on the instructional leadership team to become a Level 5 school for the 2017-2018 school year
- Supervised and coached team of 5 teachers and 2 paraprofessionals
- Planned, formulated and assessed IEP goals and activities designed to implement educational objectives and performance standards.
- LEA for all IEP meetings with parents and students to review progress, adjust academic plans.
- Implemented teacher evaluation processes, aiding program success using the TEAM evaluation process.
- Managed and conducted progress monitoring fidelity checks for EE department

CELEST L. DAVIS

Celest.L.Davis@gmail.com · Smyrna, TN · 931.261.8568

A talented healthcare profession with extensive compliance, auditing, adjustment and fee schedule experience. Highly skilled and able to quickly learn and apply new ideas, concepts, methods and technologies. Possesses exceptional leadership, organizational, oral and written communication skills as well as analytical and problem-resolution skills. Keen ability to handle multiple assignments and competing priorities simultaneously. Thrives in both independent and collaborative work environments.

EXPERIENCE

2023 – PRESENT

CREDENTIALING COORDINATOR, DAVITA

- Processing a high volume of privilege requests from: Physicians, Renal Fellows, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, and Clinical Nurse Specialists
- **Assures the integrity of information and verification source data when performing the data entry into the credentialing software for collection and maintenance of an accurate practitioner database.**
- **Serve as liaison between Credentialing Department and facilities to assist with education of and compliance with Medical Staff Bylaws.**
- **Reviews and manages practitioner files for content and completeness and to identify potentially adverse information in accordance with guidelines established by the Medical Staff Bylaws.**
- **Organize and distribute information needed for committee meetings and for facilitating governing body votes. Maintain confidential files on all providers.**

2017 – 2022

QUALITY REVIEW ANALYST, UNITED HEALTH GROUP

- Performs audits of new and/or existing provider contracts and fee schedules to ensure accuracy consistent with the loading guidelines
- Conduct tests of proposed solutions and/or changes made to determine their effectiveness and make necessary modifications
- Prepare, update, conduct, and/or share communications and documentation to update interna and/or external business partners on relevant changes and updates
- Review and/or maintain reports associated with provider contract loading in order to assess performance, determine potential issues, and/or prioritize workloads
- Receive and respond to escalated issues and problems involving contract submissions
- Perform data queries on relevant systems in order to obtain claims information

2014 –2017

CLAIMS ADJUSTMENT SPECIALIST, UNITED HEALTH GROUP

- Perform complex claims adjustments on Medicaid/Medicare, High Dollar, Home Health Care, Duplicate, Corrected Claims, and Global Maternity using CSP Facets and Macess
- Trained staff on operating systems, adjustments, and SOP's
- Helped developed peer-to-peer program for adjusters
- Analyzed trends to prevent quality errors and streamline processes
- Reviewed prior authorizations in CareOne to process claims
- Support claim turnaround times while maintaining accurate documentation in ORS
- Provide assistance to Providers with status updates
- Identify and resolve issues to prevent future calls
- Followed-up on any work needed for resolving and closing issues

2009 –2014

ASSISTANT OFFICE MANAGER, BEAMAN AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

- Managed 12-15 direct reports, mentored, and supported staff daily
- Provided professional constructive feedback for development
- Implemented strategies for more effective work performance
- Developed new hire onboarding training
- Completed the nightly bookkeeping
- Handled escalated customer issues regarding car service bills and charges
- Dispatched courtesy van service, scheduled service appointments and answered inbound service calls
- Updated Beaman's website with used car inventory

OTHER POSITIONS HELD:

- WILTON INSTRUCTOR, Michael craft stores (November 2007 – June 2010)
- INTERNET BANKING SPECIALIST, Suntrust Bank (February 2006 - April 2008)
- CUSTOMER CARE SPECIALIST, Suntrust Bank (June 2005 - January 2006)

EDUCATION

DECEMBER 2005

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

- Degree included an emphasis in Management Information System
- University Marching Band, Majorette
- Provided campus tours to prospective students

2008-2010

CULINARY ARTS, **ART INSTITUTE OF TENNESSEE**

- Attended some coursework in the Culinary Arts program with an emphasis in baking and pastries
- Dean's List, all semesters during enrollment

SKILLS

• MS Office XP, MS Excel, MS Word, MS Access, MS PowerPoint, MS One Note • UnitedHealth Care Platforms (CSP Facets, Macess, CareOne, Nice, IDRS, IEX, KANA, AIR),	• Google Docs • QuickBooks

ACTIVITIES

- Vice Chair of Rutherford County Democratic Party
- Executive Board of Member, Smyrna Baseball League

5258 MURFREESBORO RD, LA VERGNE, TN 37086
PHONE (615) 939-7439 • E-MAIL CHARLES@FRAZIER.LAW

CHARLES R. FRAZIER

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Law Offices of Charles R. Frazier – LaVergne, Tennessee

Attorney-at-Law (Oct. 2009 – Present) Principal and owner of a law office that provides legal representation for individual and business clients. Practice area focuses include representation in taxation, estate planning, and business law, including taxpayer I.R.S and Tennessee Dept. Revenue audit and collections representation, estate plan design and drafting, probate administration representation, business organization planning, and business succession planning.

Internal Revenue Service – Nashville, Tennessee

Revenue Agent (Sept. 2008 – Oct. 2009) Examine tax returns while conducting audits to determine taxpayer compliance with the Internal Revenue Code. Interviewed taxpayers and gathered facts about the taxpayer's personal or business operations. Perform research of the Internal Revenue Code, Treasury Regulations, Revenue Rulings, Revenue Procedures, and Internal Revenue Manual. Prepare administrative files, including letters, revenue agent reports, information document requests, and other documents necessary to explain and support the Internal Revenue Service's position on a taxpayer's non-compliance or compliance with the Internal Revenue Code. Negotiate with taxpayers or their representatives to resolve substantive, procedural, and other issues arising from the examination.

University of Tennessee College of Law – Knoxville, Tennessee

Law Clerk (May 2006 – Mar. 2008) Gained valuable experience in client interviewing and counseling, document drafting, business planning, and the ins and outs of business practice at several firms as a summer associate or law clerk. Collaborated with firm partners and associates to provide legal representation for firm clients with various matters at Chambliss, Bahner & Stophel, and Woolf, McClane, Bright, Allen & Carpenter. Teamed up with firm partners to provide taxation, estate planning, and business planning for firm clientele at Holbrook, Peterson & Smith.

Brikim & Associates – Clarksville, TN

Senior Account Agent (Oct. 1998 – Nov. 1999) Agent appointed as a life and health producer for Armed Forces Benefit Assoc. and First National Life Ins. Co. Prospected and added over 100 term and universal life policyholders to an existing business book. Consistently achieved sales objectives. Trained and supervised new agents.

Coaxum & Associates – St. Mary's, Georgia

Assistant Agency Manager (Nov. 1997 – Oct. 1998) Continued agent appointments with Military Benefit Assoc. and TransWorld Assurance Co. Promoted to assistant agency manager; screened, hired, and trained new agents. Prospected and added over 175 term and universal life policyholders to the account base.

Wagner & Associates – Columbus, Georiga

Life Insurance Agent (Nov. 1995 – Nov. 1997) Agent appointed as a life and health producer for Military Benefit Assoc. and TransWorld Assurance Co. Prospected and acquired an account base of over 250 term and universal life policyholders. Performed in-house presentations of company products to prospective clients. Proved ability to consistently achieve sales objectives through solid account management and commitment to client satisfaction.

EDUCATION

The University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa, Alabama
LL.M Taxation (Aug. 2019 – May 2021)

Florida Atlantic University – Boca Raton, Florida
Master of Taxation (May 2016 – Aug. 2019)

The University of Tennessee College of Law – Knoxville, Tennessee
Doctor of Jurisprudence (Aug. 2005 – May 2008)

Austin Peay State University – Clarksville, Tennessee
Bachelor of Business Administration (Aug. 2000 – May 2005)

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Transactions: Tennessee Journal of Business Law – Knoxville, Tennessee
Senior Commentary Editor (Aug. 2007 – Mar. 2008)

U.S. Army/ B Co. 3rd Bn. 75th Rgr Regt. – Ft. Benning, Georgia
Supply Specialist (Jun. 1993 – Sept. 1995)

PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE AFFILIATIONS

American Bar Association, Member
Tennessee Bar Association (TBA), Estate Planning and Probate Section Chair-Elect
TBA Estate Planning and Probate Section Middle TN Delegate
TBA House of Delegates Sixteenth District Delegate
Tennessee Bar Association Leadership Law Class of 2020
Rutherford Cannon County Bar Association, Member
Estate Planning Council of Middle Tennessee, Member
Murfreesboro Estate Planning Council, President
Leadership Rutherford Class of 2023
Rutherford Chamber of Commerce Diplomat
100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, Member

PUBLICATIONS

- *Transactions: Tennessee Journal of Business Law,* The Board's Failure to Take Action . . . May Result in a Derivative Action Against Board Members . . .: 8 Transactions: Tenn. J. Bus. L. 445, 453-56 (2007).

- *Estate planning gives you and your loved one's peace of mind,* THE TENNESSEAN, Published 5:05 a.m. CT April 24, 2023, https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2023/04/24/opinion-estate-planning-gives-you-and-your-loved-ones-peace-of-mind/70140483007/

- *How Leadership Rutherford made me a stronger, more confident leader,* THE TENNESSEAN, Published 12:57 p.m. CT July 7, 2023, https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2023/07/07/leadership-rutherford-made-me-a-stronger-more-confident-leader/70392392007/

J. Chris Hill
jchris@kw.com | (615) 838-9152| Franklin, TN

SUMMARY

Creative leader with over 10 years of expertise in Communications, Training, Learning and Development, and Pharmacy Operations. Exceptional at building lasting relationships across organizations, fostering leadership in others through collaboration, communication, and team building. Adept at driving success by developing strategic programs and initiatives that enhance productivity and engagement.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Learning Program Management
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Strategic Communications
- Instructor/Facilitator
- Leadership Development
- Business Relations
- Negotiation
- Team Building & Training
- Adaptability
- Project Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Keller Williams – *Franklin, TN*

Talent Acquisition Director / Assistant Team Leader / Director of Growth
June 2021 – Present

- Recruited and onboarded top-producing sales associates to drive market center growth and profitability.
- Delivered coaching and consulting to mid-level performers to enhance productivity and retention.
- Implemented strategic initiatives aligned with Keller Williams Growth and Career Growth standards.

- Led training and development programs for new and experienced associates in critical business areas.
- Assisted in achieving dominant market share and acceptable profitability in target markets.
- Monitored performance metrics and conducted weekly progress reviews.

Cigna (formerly Express Scripts) – *Franklin, TN*

Lead, Technical Training Analyst
November 2018 – Present

- Managed and coached Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) through the Trainer Assistance Program.
- Designed and facilitated foundational training programs for SMEs across the organization.
- Developed and evaluated training materials, including handbooks, multimedia aids, and tutorials.
- Applied data-driven insights to improve instructional methods and achieve training objectives.

Training Specialist
April 2013 – November 2018

- Acted as a liaison between operations leadership and training teams to ensure knowledge retention and performance improvement.
- Mentored emerging leaders transitioning from individual contributor roles to leadership positions.
- Oversaw corporate trainer teams across multiple locations, including remote sites.
- Launched team engagement and recognition programs, including an annual Recognition Summit.
- Managed enterprise-wide Training Request Center to align learning solutions with business goals.

Cigna (formerly Accredo Specialty Pharmacy) – *Franklin, TN*

Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT)
April 2009 – April 2013

- Enhanced training program effectiveness, resulting in reduced employee turnover.
- Designed and facilitated system training for Front-End Pharmacy operations teams.
- Contributed to Lean and Continuous Improvement initiatives.
- Processed correspondence and handled manual and automated requests efficiently.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- **National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB)**
  - Member since 2021
  - Membership Committee Chair (2024-2025)
- **Williamson County Association of Realtors (WCAR)**
  - Member since 2020
  - Membership Engagement Committee: Member (2021-2024), Vice Chair (2022), Chair (2023)
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee: Member since 2022

CERTIFICATIONS

- Lean Six Sigma
- Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Cornerstone LMS
- SumTotal LMS
- Camtasia
- SnagIt
- Microsoft Office 365

Daniel Kadeba, CPA, CSM

Dnkadeba@gmail.com
931-801-3380

Finance leader, licensed CPA professional with 19+ years of progressive corporate experience and advisory services. Strong analytical talents and business acumen; experienced in financial accounting, controllership, forecasting, budgeting, and reporting. Detailed individual with excellent interpersonal skills and collaborative finance business partner who works with stakeholders to improve business processes. Experienced with leading teams and developing staff. Proficient in numerous ERP software packages.

Areas of Expertise

- Forecasts & Budgets
- Change Management
- Project Management
- Agile & Scrum
- Finance Transformation
- Controllership
- Financial Analysis
- ETL & Data Visualization
- Process Improvement
- Variance & Trend Analysis
- Financial Reporting
- Strategic Initiatives
- Team Leadership & Development
- Cross-Functional Collaboration
- Risks and Controls management

Professional Experience

Embla Medical • Nashville, TN • 2025 to Current

Director of Finance & Strategy, Patient Care – ForMotion Clinic (January 2025 to Present)

- Partner with executive leadership to develop and execute Patient Care Americas strategies, aligning financial objectives with corporate goals and providing data-driven performance insights.
- Lead performance tracking, financial analysis, and business case development to support operational efficiency, profitability, and strategic decision-making.
- Build strong partnerships with business leaders and FP&A teams, translating complex financial data into actionable insights and driving department alignment.
- Drive innovative solutions, manage post-merger integration activities, and lead process improvements to adapt to evolving business needs.

CrossCountry Consulting • Remote • 2022 to 2025

Managing Consultant – Finance Transformation (October 2022 to Present)

- Directed finance transformation initiatives for fintech clients, including developing roadmaps to transition from current state to future state operations and aligning technology strategies with business objectives.
- Conducted risk assessments and controls testing for large government-sponsored enterprises, identifying deficiencies and recommending operational improvements.
- Partnered with leadership teams at reinsurance companies to provide FP&A staff augmentation, driving improved forecasting and financial planning processes.
- Managed payroll transformation projects for financial institutions, delivering scalable solutions to enhance compliance, efficiency, and reporting.

Senior Consultant – Finance Transformation (January 2022 to October 2022)

- Supported the evaluation of ongoing transformation initiatives for global insurance and healthcare clients, assessing current processes and readiness for ERP implementations like Workday.
- Conducted operational and system readiness assessments for enterprise finance transformations, defining improvement targets and creating actionable strategies for executive teams.

- Partnered with cross-functional teams to document current processes and outline future-state workflows for improved operational efficiency.
- Provided industry expertise for enterprise data architecture, integration strategies, and implementing finance and HR systems.

Key Accomplishments:

- **Supported Workday HR/Finance Cross-functional projects** for a global Insurance client with **M&A growth strategy.**
- **Conducted risk assessments,** pinpointed control gaps, and devised solutions **for risk mitigation** while leading insightful process discussions with stakeholders **to enhance internal controls and operational efficiency**
- Successfully led FP&A projects that resulted in **streamlined reporting processes** and improved **forecasting accuracy.**
- Outlined technology objectives**, future state requirements identification**, and thorough **vendor assessment process** for optimal PSA & CMS system selection. Offered **implementation planning guidance,** future-state roadmaps for finance transformations and resource recommendations

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Cigna-HealthSpring • Nashville, TN • May 2016 to January 2022

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS MANAGER

- Acted as the finance business partner for shared service departments, managing financial planning, quarterly forecasting, and long-term strategic initiatives.
- Developed financial models and reporting tools to drive business decisions, focusing on efficiency and profitability metrics.
- Conducted variance analyses on operational expenses and identified areas for improvement.
- Managed $150M in OpEx for shared service departments and 300+ headcount, partnering with leadership to improve budget efficiency.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Enhanced financial forecasting processes, improving accuracy to **95% from plan** through streamlining across Business Unites and model optimizations.
- Identified **cost-saving opportunities** that reduced operational expenses by 10% across departments.
- Partnered with actuaries on the **Part C bid process**, directly impacting **Medicare Advantage profitability.**

Community Health Systems • Franklin, TN • April 2014 to May 2016

REVENUE MANAGER

- Led healthcare projects and analytical reviews on reimbursement issues, increasing expertise in Medicaid regulations and their potential employer impact.
- Oversaw accounts receivable and allowances for newly acquired practices, ensuring accurate reporting for Medicare, Medicaid, and Tricare/Champus cost reports.
- Collaborated with facility CFOs to manage bad debt in line with company policies and supported the Shared Services Center by providing metrics on claims processing time, denial rates, and days in accounts receivable.
- Conducted monthly reviews of financial reporting, including net revenues, bad debt expense, and valuation of accounts receivable, and managed Medicare/Medicaid audit appeals.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Managed **$100M in net revenue** for multiple facilities, reducing DSO by 5% and improving collections.

- **Completed over 10 cost reports** collaborating with hospital CFOs and led related audits from CMS.

Gibson Brands - Pro Audio • Nashville, TN • December 2012 to April 2014

SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST

- Designed and implemented financial reporting tools, dashboards, and flash reports.
- Partnered with the EMEA President to present sales dashboards, providing insights into regional performance and supporting strategic decision-making.
- Led ERP systems implementation for Great Plains and Dynamics AX, standardizing processes across multiple regions.
- Drove change management initiatives post-acquisition by developing and implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), streamlining processes, and aligning operations across three newly acquired business units.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Cleared a **year-long backlog of unreconciled bank accounts,** ensuring compliance and accuracy.
- **Standardized financial operations** across Business Units, improving collaboration and efficiency.
- Supported **external audits** by delivering detailed reports and analyses.
- Delivered actionable insights through dashboards on international (EMEA) sales performance, influencing **strategic direction for global leadership**.

First Acceptance Corporation • Nashville, TN •May 2007 to December 2012

CORPORATE ACCOUNTANT (JULY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012)

- Analyzed general ledger accounts and performed reconciliations.
- Facilitated month/year-end close and collaborated with auditors.
- Designed and implemented a car insurance rating system to improve pricing strategies.

ANALYST (MAY 2007 TO JUNE 2010)

- Researched industry trends, competitor performance, and market conditions, preparing detailed reports for executive leadership.
- Conducted financial forecasts and analyzed variances to support underwriting and claims initiatives.
- Partnered with cross-functional teams to provide insights into claim trends and competitor strategies, enabling data-driven decision-making.
- Developed dashboards and financial models to streamline reporting and improve forecasting accuracy.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Designed and **implemented car insurance rating system**.
- Created competitor analysis reports that shaped underwriting strategy and pricing decisions.

Education & Credentials

Master of Business Administration
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY | Nashville, TN

Bachelor of Business Administration-Finance & Computer Sciences
AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY | Clarksville, TN

Certifications, Licenses & Technical Skills

Certified Public Accountant (Tennessee License Number 22348)
Certified ScrumMaster (Certificate ID: 001425491)
ERP | PeopleSoft | Dynamics Great Plains | Workday | Oracle Hyperion Financial Management & Essbase
SQL| Tableau| PowerBI

Community Leadership

CrossCountry Black Employee Network ERG Lead | Cigna AA/B ERG Mentor | Nashville March of Dimes Board Member| Big Brother Big Sister of Middle TN volunteer

LaTarsha V. White, Ed.S

1652 Carson Meadows Ln. Nolensville, TN 37135
M: 901-830-9810
E: latarsha.white4@gmail.com

Objective:

Dedicated and accomplished educational leader with 18 years of experience in teaching, administration, and strategic leadership, seeking an appointment as a charter school board member. Committed to advancing the mission of Novus Smart Academy by leveraging expertise in curriculum development, equity-driven leadership, and fiscal accountability. Passionate about creating inclusive, high-quality educational environments that foster academic excellence and community engagement for all students.

Professional Experience:

6th-grade Social Studies and Science, & 9th-12th grade Business and Marketing and Personal Finance Teacher.
Memphis Business Academy, Memphis, TN — 2012-2015
- Served as Department Chair and PLC leader, leading collaborative planning sessions and data-driven instruction improvement initiatives.
- Designed and implemented lesson plans aligned with state standards, fostering critical thinking and engagement among students.
- Facilitated professional development workshops for colleagues on effective instructional strategies.

6th and 7th-grade Science and History Teacher
KIPP Memphis, Memphis, TN — 2015-2
-Createds interdisciplinary lessons that connect historical context with scientific concepts.
- Utilized data-driven approaches to inform instruction, ensuring measurable student growth.
- Participated actively in school-wide initiatives to enhance the academic and social development of students.
- Grade Level Department Chair

Special Education Coordinator

Intrepid College Prep Academy, Antioch, TN — 2018-2020
- Led the Special Education Department, ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations, including managing 504 plans and RTI systems.
- Developed and monitored individualized education plans (IEPs) tailored to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Collaborated with general education teachers to implement inclusive instructional practices, accommodations and modifications..

- Facilitated professional development sessions for staff on compliance, 504 management, and effective RTI and RTI-B implementation.

Principal in Residence

Republic High School, Nashville, TN — *August 2023 - Present*

- Oversee daily school operations, including instructional leadership and school culture development and implementation.
- Manage and lead a team of over 40 teachers and faculty members, ensuring alignment with the school's mission and goals.
- Develop and allocate the annual budget for operations, curriculum, athletics, clubs, and extracurricular activities, ensuring fiscal responsibility.
- Collaborate with faculty to implement data-driven strategies, increasing student performance and engagement across all departments.
- Lead professional development sessions focused on blended learning, technology integration, and culturally responsive teaching practices.
- Implement mentorship programs for new teachers, fostering professional growth and retention while aligning with the school's mission.
- Evaluate teacher and leader performance, providing actionable feedback to support their development and improve instructional practices.
- Coordinate and manage school-wide initiatives that align with district goals for student achievement and leadership development.
- Administer and oversee all aspects of the 504 process, including initial referrals, evaluations, and the development of individualized accommodation plans for students with disabilities.

Assistant Principal of Science, ELA, History, Electives, and Culture

Republic Charter Schools (Nashville Prep), Nashville, TN — *August 2021 - Present*

- Spearheaded curriculum development in STEM, fostering innovation and critical thinking among students.
- Collaborated with teachers to integrate interdisciplinary approaches across subject areas, enhancing student understanding of interconnected subjects.
- Developed and led cultural awareness programs, promoting equity and inclusion throughout the school community.
- Implemented strategies to reduce instances of bullying and foster a safe, welcoming environment for all students.
- Enhanced elective offerings through technology-driven initiatives and real-world learning opportunities with community partners.

Elementary Assistant Principal of Culture

East End Prep, Nashville, TN — *December 2020 - August 2021*

- Directed initiatives to create a culturally responsive and inclusive school environment, fostering a sense of belonging among students, staff, and families.
- Collaborated with teachers to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy into curriculum and instructional practices, leading to increased student engagement and measurable academic success.
- Developed and implemented school-wide restorative practices, reducing disciplinary incidents and enhancing conflict resolution skills among students and staff.
- Addressed and mitigated instances of bullying and discrimination, ensuring a safe, supportive, and equitable school culture.
- Established and monitored systems for tracking and analyzing school culture data, identifying trends and developing targeted interventions to improve outcomes.
- Partnered with families and community organizations to suppo...
- Mentored and coached teachers on classroom management and culturally responsive strategies to enhance student engagement and behavior.
- Contributed to the recruitment, onboarding, and retention of diverse teaching staff to align with the school's commitment to equity and inclusion.

Middle School Assistant Principal of Instruction

Intrepid College Prep Academy, Nashville, TN — *October 2018 - December 2020*

- Provided leadership in curriculum development, ensuring alignment with educational standards and tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of students.
- Collaborated with teachers to implement data-driven instructional strategies, resulting in a 24% increase in standardized test scores in Science and History.
- Designed and implemented intervention programs targeting student gaps, focusing on measurable growth and outcomes.
- Conducted regular classroom observations and provided actionable feedback to enhance instructional practices and student engagement.
- Developed and led professional development sessions focused on best practices in instruction, assessment, and fostering a growth mindset among educators.
- Established systems for monitoring student progress and achievement, using data to identify gaps and develop targeted interventions to improve outcomes.
- Partnered with families to support students' academic growth and development.
- Mentored and coached teachers on differentiation techniques to address diverse learning needs and promote equity in the classroom.

Athletic Director

Nashville Prep, Nashville, TN — *August 2023 - Present*

- Developed strategic plans for the athletic program, leading to increased participation and improved performance.
- Ensured student-athlete well-being by adhering to health and safety guidelines.
- Fostered strong relationships with coaches, parents, and community stakeholders to enhance the athletic experience.

Education:

Doctoral Student - K-12 Administration
Trevecca University, Nashville, TN Conferring -2025

M.Ed - K-12 Special Education
Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN

M.Ed - K-6 Elementary Education
Cambridge College, Cambridge, MA

Ed. S - K-12 Curriculum & Instructional Leadership
Cambridge College, Cambridge, MA

B.S - Business Management & Organizational Development
Bethel University, McKenzie, TN

Key Skills:

- Strategic Leadership & School Management
- Curriculum Development for STEM, Humanities, and Electives
- Blended Learning & Technology Integration
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Professional Development Facilitation
- Interdisciplinary Teaching Strategies
- Cultural Competency & Inclusive Practices
- Community Engagement & Outreach
- Equity and Diversity Advocacy
- Leadership in Restorative Practices

Certifications:

- TN-K-12 Special Education
- Administrative Licensure

Professional Affiliations:

- Financial Member, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Starson Audate

starsonaudate@gmail.com | 859.544.7583 | http://www.linkedin.com/in/audatestarson

Result oriented financial professional with over 6+ years of experience in strategy, financial planning and capital management. My most recent focus has been on crafting diligence packages for new businesses acquired and preparing of board materials to evaluate capital position under given scenarios.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Fortitude Re **Nashville, TN**
Senior Associate, Corporate Strategic Analysis *Oct 2021 – Present*

- Build and oversee the company's excess capital projection model to facilitate planning for dividend sweep and funding for new deals including business combination and reinsurance transaction
- Collaborate with three other peers for the preparation and modeling of the company's 5-years plan with the CEO, CFO, and other executives' inputs and buy-ins
- Create supporting analysis for leadership's decision on effective capital deployment strategy and active balance sheet management
- Partner with senior leaders to identify and create effective metrics to better measure core business performance
- Transform pricing models into three statement financial reports in both US GAAP and EBS Framework
- Analyze new deals on a standalone basis and their projected impact to our inforce portfolio on a block by block basis both in US GAAP and Bermuda EBS framework
- Prepare pro-forma three statement financials for key regulatory filings, such as Form A, for the VA segments of our business
- Coordinate and prepare the strategic due diligence package for the executive committee to facilitate decision making on new deals including block reinsurance, flow deal, and business combination - worked on 20+ deals so far ranging from $100 million to $8 billion in acquired asset
- Perform detail ratio analysis of our business by entity and apply advance statistical tools to spot tail dependence in our metrics

Fortitude Re **Nashville, TN**
Associate, Operation *April 2021 – Oct 2021*

- Project managed the finance workstream and report directly to the Chief Operating Officer during the acquisition of the PALAC block by Fortitude Re from Prudential (*$31Billion*)
- Analyzed quarterly claims' count and validated the ceded versus net amount to facilitate quarterly closing
- Improved the loss portfolio transfer (LPT) monthly activity analysis by an 86% reduction time through VBA coding the process (This project required very fine attention to detail due to the sheer size of the data in question)
- Analyzed claims activities and validated payments for treasury settlements between AIG and Fortitude
- Performed variance analysis on quarterly material requisitions per department using SAP analytics tools
- Trained four other employees on technology usage and the implementation of the automated tools that I have created
- Served as a project manager for the then Chief Risk Officer for two specific deals

Peach Fine Jewelry *(Manufacturing and Retail)* **Nashville, TN**
Associate Accountant May 2019 – Jan 2021

- Owned the accounting cycle and ensured accurate bookings of records for all seven of our locations across the USA
- Ensure accurate closing of records and coordinate engagement with our external consultant who acts as our auditor
- Analyzed and forecasted operational cash flow for the firm
- Ensure accurate collection and reporting of a number of federal and local taxes for the business including sales, franchise and payroll taxes
- Created monthly financial statement and performed reconciliation of accounts
- Evaluated all required documentation in preparation for the 2020 PPP loan application and ensured 100% loan forgiveness
- Performed credit-related due diligence and monitored all of our senior debt covenants
- Prepared Pro-forma projection of financial statements as supportive documentation for a successful SBA loan application
- Trained all junior employees on Quickbook, and Loqicmate (*Industry specific for reporting, and business analytic software*)

Chairman of the Portfolio Management Committee (*$3 Million of the University of Kentucky Endowment*) **Lexington, KY**

- Invested in a manner that is consistent with our IPS, reported and presented to the endowment board
- Managed a team of 6 analysts, and deployed more than $400,000 cash into new equities not including rotation of existing capital into new securities
- Analyzed our holdings using various methods such as DCF model, price multiples, and Monte Carlo simulation

EDUCATION

University of Kentucky **Lexington, KY**
Master's of Science in Finance (MSF)

Berea College **Berea, KY**
B.B.A. Finance and **B.S.** in Accounting

SKILLS & INTEREST

- Board Material Preparation
- Preparation of Investor Material
- 5-year strategic forecast
- Long Range Projection
- Project Management
- Python | Quickbook Online
- SQL Workbench
- SAP Analytics
- Advance Excel & VBA

Darius E. Moore

Gallatin, TN
darius.e.moore@gmail.com
(731) 616-8708

Objective

Business development professional possessing exceptional relationship management skills, excellent interpersonal and business communication skills, and an extensive knowledge and expertise in strategic planning and client relationship management systems; with a focus on helping organizations, businesses, and individuals develop and achieve diverse goals efficiently.

Education

Middle Tennessee State University — **Murfreesboro, TN**
Bachelors of Business Administration — *August 2010*
Major: *Marketing*
Minor: *Business Administration*

Experience

Pruett Financial Group — **Nashville, TN**
Director of Recruitment & Talent Selection — *Sept 2024 - present*

- Developing and leading strategic recruitment initiatives to align hiring efforts with organizational objectives, including forecasting talent needs, monitoring labor market trends, and implementing employer branding strategies.
- Managing and mentoring a high-performing recruitment team, setting performance metrics, enhancing effectiveness through training, and overseeing sourcing strategies via job boards, social media, and external partnerships.
- Streamlining recruitment processes by upgrading applicant tracking systems, optimizing key hiring metrics, and collaborating with department heads and HR teams to align recruitment with company culture and workforce planning.

Corner To Corner — **Nashville, TN**
Community Engagement Manager — *Jan 2024 - June 2024*

- Developed donor pipelines and cultivated relationships with high-net-worth individuals, generating six-figure contributions.
- Planned and executed events to engage new donors and prospects.
- Created personalized appreciation letters and impact reports for major donors.

Alzheimer's Association (TN) — **Nashville, TN**
VP of Development — *June 2023 - December 2023*

- Led fundraising strategies across 10 Tennessee markets, driving six-figure campaign growth.
- Supervised a team to enhance community engagement and revenue streams.
- Collaborated with regional leadership to develop strategic growth plans.

United Way of Greater Nashville **Nashville, TN**

Account Manager *May 2021 – July 2022*

- Managed corporate giving across 30+ accounts, including multinational corporations and local agencies.
- Expanded workplace giving campaigns, aligning with corporate social responsibility goals.
- Conducted market research to drive revenue growth and donor retention.

PENCIL **Nashville, TN**

Partnership Manager *April 2018 – April 2021*

- Built partnerships between community organizations and MNPS schools to enhance academic outcomes.
- Facilitated volunteer engagement and maintained effective relationships with stakeholders.
- Collaborated with marketing teams to recognize and retain partners.

Leadership & Civic Engagement

Phoenix Club of Nashville **Nashville, TN**

Chair of Inclusion and Diversity, Member

- Coordinated partnerships and ongoing engagements with members and the local community–specifically with regard to leadership development and civic engagement.
- Supported the recruiting efforts of the New Membership team for the organization through strategic planning, committee engagement, and initiative analysis.

Bordeaux and North Nashville Chamber of Commerce **Nashville, TN**

Board Member

- Helped to determine effective strategies for engaging and supporting the needs of community members in North Nashville and Bordeaux.
- Supported community development efforts and facilitated meetings on local initiatives.

Pi Sigma Epsilon; *Professional Marketing Fraternity* **Murfreesboro, TN**

Vice President of Business Administration

- Liaison for guest relations with outside speakers.
- Acted as an Intermediate for Chapter relations and record-keeping with national headquarters.
- Coordinated fundraising events and maintained chapter records.

Dexter Peterson

Qualified administrator with long history in education and dedication to school performance, teacher training and student success. Attentive to the pulse of a school to proactively manage negative trends and recognize success in teachers and methods. Hands-on in mentoring teachers and supporting students.

341Great Circle Road
Nashville, Tn 37228
(662) 617-3968
dexpeters@hotmail.com

EXPERIENCE

Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville, Tn ExEd Contracter/Consultant

2024-Present

- Design and implement lesson plans
- Present PDs to faculty to and sta on best practices for delivering instruction
- Develop/Write IEPs
- Support Co-taught class spaces.

Lead SouthEast High School, Nashville, Tn- Exed 2023-Present

- Design and implement data driven lesson plans that help grow and support students who may have cognitive and/or developmental delays
- Develop individualized education programs (IEPs) for students
  - Maintains special education files, both paper and electronic files, as directed by federal, state, and local practices.
- Collect data on individual student skills to determine the effectiveness of programming and measure progress toward IEP goals

Columbus High School, Columbus, MS - Principal 2022-2023

- Columbus High School/ Sep 2022 to Current
- Developed positive relationships with school students, teachers and the local community.
- Guided instruction by mentoring teachers to improve leadership and teaching eectiveness.
- Visited classrooms to evaluate teacher instructional techniques as part of the annual evaluation cycle.
- Oversaw school budgets, documented changes and tracked • expenses to allocate and manage school funds.
- Developed and implemented standards for student academic achievement aligned with district, state and local initiatives. • Developed and tracked benchmarks for measuring institutional success to help teachers maximize teaching potential.

Kirkland Group, Jackson, Ms - Educational Consultant

2022- 2023

SKILLS

Microsoft Oce Suite Data Driven Instruction

Technology Integration

School Improvement Planning

Performance Data Analysis

Professional Development Coaching

AWARDS

2017-2018

VHS Teacher of the year

LANGUAGES

English

- Worked with school administrators to determine course needs and set frameworks.
- Evaluated course performance to determine areas in need of • Improvement.
- Investigated and documented performance of educators and support team members and identified areas requiring
- Improvement.

Columbus Middle School, Columbus, MS- Assistant Principal
June 2019 - 2022

- Oversee student disciplinary actions and provide guidance to sta members in handling disciplinary issues.
- Collaborate with teachers and sta to develop and implement school policies and procedures.
- Assist with the development of the school's academic programs and curriculum.
- Monitor student attendance and work with parents and guardians to ensure students are attending school regularly.
- Conduct classroom observations to evaluate teacher performance and provide feedback.
- Manage the school's budget and allocate resources to support the school's academic programs and extracurricular activities. • Attend meetings with parents, teachers, and other school administrators to discuss school policies and procedures. • Provide support and guidance to students who are experiencing academic or personal diculties.
- Help to create a positive school climate by promoting respect, tolerance, and understanding among students and sta.

Starkville Consolidated School District - Starkville, MS
Teacher
August 2018 - May 2019

- Develop and implement computer science curriculum for students of all levels.
- Teach students how to use a variety of computer software and hardware, including coding languages, operating systems, and productivity software.
- Create lesson plans that incorporate a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, hands-on activities, and group projects.
- Assess student progress and provide feedback to students and their parents or guardians.
- Stay up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies in computer science education.
- Support students in developing their own projects and encourage them to pursue their interests in computer science.
- Manage classroom technology, including computers, printers, and other equipment.
- Collaborate with other teachers and administrators to integrate computer science into other areas of the curriculum.
- Encourage students to think critically and creatively about technology and its impact on society.
- Foster a positive and inclusive classroom environment that encourages all students to participate and learn.

Vicksburg High School, Vicksburg,MS — *Lead Teacher*

July 2012 - May 2018

- Planned and implemented lessons using various teaching strategies
- to meet diverse student needs
- Organized creative and fun activities, enhancing children's physical, emotional and social well-being.
- Participated in workshops, trainings and conferences to improve • Communicated with parents regularly to maintain student progress
- schedule meetings and increase overall student happiness. • Met with administrators and department team members to work on curriculum planning and assessment methods.

East Oktibbeha County High School, Starkville,MS — *Interim Long Term Substitute Teacher* **October 2006 - May 2011**

Direct General Claims , Memphis, TN— *Claims Adjuster*

August 2005 - October 2006

- Investigated and evaluated insurance claims to determine the extent of the insurance company's liability and the appropriate amount of compensation.
- Interviewed claimants, witnesses, and other relevant parties to gather information about the claim.
- Reviewed police reports, medical records, and other documents to determine the cause and extent of damages or injuries.
- Negotiated with claimants and their representatives to reach a

Youth Villages, Memphis, TN— *Teacher/Counselor*

January 2005 - August 2005

- Supervised students during overnight hours, ensuring their safety and well-being.
- Developed and implemented evening and nighttime activities that are engaging, educational, and appropriate for the age and interests of the students.

Educational Background

Alverno College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin -Doctor of Education

Dissertation research in Improving Low performing schools

William Carey University, Hattiesburg, MS — *Specialist Educational Leadership*

Earned degree to practice as a licensed administrator

Strayer University, Washington D.C — *Educational Management*

Earned degree in educational management which focused on school leadership and managing the educational environment.

Mississippi State University , Starkville MS—
Interdisciplinary Studies

Focused discipline in Music, Communications, and Technology Education

Tatyana Polite, MBA

Nashville, TN | tatyanapolite@gmail.com | (803) 206-1479

Professional Skills

- Training and Development
- Benefits Administration
- Employee Engagement
- Talent Acquisition
- Change Management
- HRIS Administration
- Employment Laws
- Provider Contracts
- Onboarding
- Employee Relations
- Provider Relations
- Employee Retention

Professional Experience

Ardent Health Services | Brentwood, TN

Human Resources Business Partner January 2025 – Current

- Deliver timely, high-impact HR support to senior management and directors, offering expert guidance on the consistent application of HR policies, procedures, and systems across diverse functional areas.
- Strategically align HR initiatives with organizational objectives, driving talent management practices to support business growth and enhance performance.
- Act as a trusted advisor, providing solutions to complex departmental, people, and change management challenges.
- Coach executive leaders on advanced HR processes, including talent planning, leadership development, regulatory compliance (federal and state), and performance management best practices.
- Leverage people analytics and talent data to inform strategic decision-making and address business challenges with actionable insights.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for recruiters, offering comprehensive requisition management support and assisting hiring managers in drafting job descriptions for compensation review and approval.
- Lead the development and expansion of employee engagement strategies, fostering a dynamic and inclusive workplace culture.
- Collaborate closely with leadership teams and recruiters to drive recruitment, selection, and negotiation processes, ensuring the acquisition of top-tier talent.
- Spearhead the onboarding of new leaders, providing in-depth analysis of team performance, talent potential, employee engagement, and ongoing talent acquisition efforts.
- Partner with managers and directors to optimize performance management cycles, including goal setting, performance improvement plans, employee relations issues, and navigating relevant employment legislation.

Blue Cloud Pediatric Surgery Center | Glen Rock, PA

People Operations Partner (HRBP) December 2023 – Current

- Collaborate with CHRO, VP, and HR Managers in policy creation and implementation in all HR aspects.
- Serve as SME to HR team in various HR-related topics and resolve any issues that may arise.
- Strategic and Administrative collaboration in Compensation and Benefit plans (PTO policies), New Hire On-Boarding and Recruitment processes, create employee training & development content, facilitate staff training sessions, and Maintenance of Handbook(s).
- Primary POC for CA HR-related matters.
- Organize and Lead HR programs; Annual Performance Reviews, Merit Increases, Engagement Surveys.

- Gather and analyze data with useful HR metrics, like time to hire and employee turnover rates
- Ensure compliance with labor regulations
- Performs audits to ensure compliance in state and federal wage and hour law
- Suggests new procedures and policies for improving employee experience as well as the efficiency of HR department and company
- Partners with all levels of leadership to develop and enhance overall culture
- Assists management in the application of disciplinary and performance management
- Coordinates manager/employee mediation and coaching
- Escalates complex Employee Relations issues to senior HR staff
- Other duties as assigned.

ArchWell Health | Nashville, TN

Human Resources Analyst, Provider Recruiting and Onboarding May 2022 – December 2023

- Manage the complete cycle recruitment process for provider candidates, including sourcing, contractual negotiations, and contract execution across various markets on a multi-state level.
- Partner with legal operations to execute employment agreements and addendums as needed.
- Partner with the Senior Medical Director of Cardiology to develop a residency recruitment program to develop a strong candidate pipeline.
- Assist with HRIS process improvement and the maintenance of files and records on the recruitment process.
- Facilitate the onboarding experience to include coordination of eClinicalWorks training, benefits election, benefits enrollment, 401K selections and adjustments, and various onboarding tasks.
- Facilitate Provider engagement surveys identifying trendlines to support provider retention efforts.
- Draft new policies or amendments to guidelines and submit proposals for review.
- Identifying benefits, disadvantages, and omissions in existing policy frameworks.
- Stay current on employment laws and practices across various markets on a multi-state level.
- Enhance provider relations and engagement strategy, overseeing the full spectrum of relationships with providers, including initial outreach, collaboration, and strategic engagement.
- Collaborates cross-functionally to effectively deliver projects, best practices, and process improvement initiatives.
- Coordinates and manages timely execution of projects to support the Provider experience, from development to implementation.
- Develop relevant materials, resources, and tools to support the upskilling/training and communication needs that support the Provider experience and onboarding activities.
- Analyze, edit, and gate-keeps content and detect trends from the provider network for stakeholders and business partners.
- Creates and executes processes, procedures, and style guides that support feedback, communications, and Provider engagement activities.
- Consults and collaborates with the executive leadership team and business partners on comprehensive communications and upskilling/training plans for Providers.
- Interprets reporting and develops actionable performance recommendations distributed to the key stakeholders.
- Provides real-time information and guidance to Providers requiring assistance with day-to-day procedural questions and operations.
- Guides the Provider Recruitment & Onboarding team with developing process improvement solutions based on field and Provider feedback.
- Contribute to the department's effectiveness by interacting with account managers, physicians, and market leadership for continuous process improvement.

Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Health | Columbia, SC

Interim Healthcare Recruiter, Human Resources Jan 2022 – May 2022

- Identifies and recruits qualified applicants for assigned positions utilizing active and passive recruitment strategies.
- Establishes and maintains relationships with operational leaders, functioning as the primary contact for assigned leaders to address all recruitment needs.
- Partners with leaders to ensure they are aware of strategies that will enhance their ability to identify the most qualified candidate, including behavioral interviewing techniques and recommendations for peer, group, or stakeholder interviews; and partners with the leader to identify recruitment barriers and opportunities and provides recommended solutions.
- Creates a pipeline of candidates through various sources (e.g., school partnerships, social networking, employment websites, job fairs, networking) to meet recruitment and operational goals.

HR Specialist, Human Resources Oct 2021 – Jan 2022

- Completes employment verifications; review records request and tracks annual employee health compliance.
- Performs operational/transactional functions, including answering general HR questions about benefits, policies, and procedures.
- Tracking day-to-day management of onboarding new hires and verifying licenses and certifications when applicable.
- Conducts general hospital orientation for new hires/transfers.
- Perform HRIS data entry and audit employee data to ensure HRIS data integrity.

Licensing and Credentialing Consultant |*Remote*

Contract (Temp) – Marloin Cummings, DDS Oct 2020 – May 2022

- Manage and process provider licensure applications with state dental boards.
- Monitor providers' adherence to continuing education requirements and all other requisites necessary to keep licenses in good standing.
- Prepare and maintain reports of credentialing activities such as accreditation, membership, facility privileges, licensing, credentials, and insurance records.
- Research updated state and federal regulations and policies as needed.
- Maintain, update, and provide credentialing data in the CAQH system. Releasing information to requesting agencies and public inquiries when required by law.
- Attend weekly virtual meetings and provide updates, as needed with clients/providers.

Great Expressions Dental Centers | Jacksonville, FL

Treatment Coordinator Sep 2020 – Sep 2021

- Reported trends in pre-authorization approvals/denials to upper-level executives weekly and identify opportunities for improvement and root causes of denied pre-authorizations.
- Performs work queue activities (posting payments/denials/charges management) on a daily basis not limited to self-pay/sliding fee, Medicaid, and commercial plans.
- Communicate directly with managers, clinicians, and staff in regards to the collections of claims for services. This includes coding, system processes, staff errors, denials and rejections, and incorrect payment of claims.
- File appeals as needed to resolve payer denials and work with payers and monitor appeals in process.
- Properly track and document all denial and appeal activity.
- Promptly provide any needed information for audit requests as directed.
- Lead the department's dental claim review initiatives.

Lead Clinical Dental Assistant, Great Expressions Dental Centers Sep 2020 – Sep 2021

- Respond to clinical and operational issues in a timely and professional manner.
- Assist in the direct hire of clinical and administrative staff, and supervise and train new clinical employees.
- Establish and maintain operating policies and procedures.
- Deliver direct individual and team leadership to ensure all office employees produce outstanding client service.

Lexington Medical Center | West Columbia, SC

Business Office Associate Oct 2018 - Oct 2019

- Responsible for the authorization/pre-certification process to include coordinating with outside and internal organizations along with insurance companies to ensure prior approval requirements are met.
- Provides specific medical information to financial services to maximize reimbursement to the hospital and physicians.
- Responsible for following up after patient's consultation, procedure, and/or test to determine if the physician has received report; continues to check on status until complete.
- Serves as Liaison between the provider, practice, patient, and specialist providing the service.
- Communicates and coordinates procedures with specialist offices and coordinating health departments.
- Provides appropriate patient clinical information and referral needs to specialist office.
- Promptly responds to patient's scheduling requirements (date and time), questions, and concerns to ensure patient experience expectations are met or exceeded.
- Ensures timely appointments are booked and reviews details and expectations with patients about the referral process.
- Verifies physician's orders and schedules appointments to ensure the accuracy of results and communicates with the patient the guidelines, protocols, and location.

Education

South University Oct 2023

- Master in Business Administration (MBA), Summa Cum Laude

South University May 2022

- Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management, Magna Cum Laude

Tools & Frameworks

- **Ceridian Dayforce**, HRIS
- **UKG**, Human Capital Management
- **PageUp**, Applicant Tracking System
- Citrix Workspace | **Sebastian**, HRIS
- Citrix Workspace | **Lawson**, HRIS
- **PayChex**, HRIS, Human Capital Management
- **PeopleFluent**

Patricia Pryor

Educational Leadership

Contact

Address
Murfreesboro, TN, 37129

Phone
(216) 647-7036

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ppeoples26@gmail.com

Skills

- Curriculum Development and Design
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
- Data Analysis
- Policy and Procedure Development
- Proficient in G-Suite and Microsoft
- Professional Development Leader
- Results Driven

Experienced educational leader, instructional coach, professional development trainer, and manager of English Language Arts department. Demonstrated experience in organizing departmental and school wide initiatives, training teachers on best practices for ELA, and collaborating with educational leaders to make data driven decisions.

Work History

2022-04 - Current

Assistant Principal, Instructional Coach

KIPP Antioch College Prep, Antioch, Tennessee

- Oversaw training and development for team of 16 teachers; led over 10 meetings to convey policy and department changes
- Supervised and evaluated teaching and support staff through instructional leadership, coaching, observation and feedback, and professional development
- Defined and enforced student academic achievement standards in line with district goals and objectives
- Coached over 16 ELA teachers to improve practices through professional development and modeling instructional strategies
- Analyzed student data, diagnosed instructional needs and identified research-based instructional strategies.

2021-05 - 2022-05

Founding Dean of Culture, Instructional Coach

KIPP Nashville, Antioch, TN

- Developed and led 36 staff members in school wide professional development and training session on school wide culture, discipline, and equity practices
- Coordinates and implements school-wide discipline system with meaningful incentives and consequences in multi-class settings
- Coached four teachers toward development goals related to classroom culture, management, and instruction weekly, as well as deliver instructional professional development school-wide
- Conducted data meetings with teachers after each benchmark assessment, and monitor overall academic progress for students
- Planned and organized extracurricular activities supporting development of student interpersonal skills and relationships

2019-07 - 2021-05

Founding ELA Teacher, Reading Coordinator

KIPP Nashville, Antioch, TN

- Developed and established academically rigorous lessons, adapts unit plans, rubrics, and assessments

- Adapted lessons to differentiate instruction and meet students' diverse learning needs and abilities.
- Analyzed data to inform instructional decisions for 66 students
- Planned, formulated, and assessed goals, policies and activities designed to implement reading performance goals for 300 students
- Designed, implemented, and managed successful reading training programs to meet department and school needs
- Lead the 5th grade team as Grade Level Chair

2015-08 - 2019-05

Writing Teacher, Writing Chair

LaVergne Middle School, La Vergne, TN

- Served as Department Co-Chair in 2018-2019 school year; ELA department earned level five status on TNReady and school earned Blue Ribbon status
- Evaluated academic skills of each student through verbal assessments, graded assignments and standardized tests
- Developed and established academically rigorous lessons, adapts unit plans, rubrics, and assessments
- Used data to inform instructional decisions for 120 students

Education

2023-09 - 2024-08

Master of Education: Educational Leadership

Austin Peay State University - Clarksville, TN

2013-08 - 2015-05

Master of Education: Curriculum and Instruction

Middle Tennessee State University - Murfreesboro, TN

2007-09 - 2011-06

Bachelor of Fine Arts: Dance

Ohio University - Athens, OH

Affiliations

Board Member for Novus Smart Academy Charter School
Aspiring Assistant Principal Network
Tennessee Educators of Color Fellow
TNAchieves Mentor

Erica Roberts

Contact

Phone
(865) 936 – 7460

Email
Erica.Roberts@kippnashville.org

Residence
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Additional Certifications

Reading Endorsed K-12

ESOL Endorsed

Facilitator's Coaches Series (UF)

Advanced Coaching Academy

Marzano Certified

SEL Certified

GET Certified

Cadre of Aspiring Principals (CAP)

Summary

Academic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience in instruction, leading schools, and advocating for education. Strong background in district school improvement initiatives, curriculum writing, data analysis, intervention implementation, professional development, public speaking, and instructional best practice.

Skill Highlights

- Strategic Planning and Prioritization
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Leadership in Academics
- Relationship Building
- Driving Outcomes
- Organization
- Communication
- Service-Focused

Education

Master of Curriculum and Instruction - Western Governors University
Master of Educational Leadership - Nova Southeastern University
Elementary Education K-8 - Tusculum College
Early Childhood Education K-3 - University of Tennessee
Science of General Education - University of North Florida

Experience

Assistant Principal/Principal in Residence
KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary (June 2024 – present)

- API of Kindergarten
- Roles: Manage 8 Kindergarten teachers
- Systems: Foundations of Reading and Staff Culture
- Collaborate with lead team on systems and structures
- Lead Kindergarten Math Internalizations for regions bi-weekly
    - Build Content Knowledge
- Hire and retain teachers through hiring process and onboarding plans
- Drive Instructional practices through data and real time coaching
- Plan and prioritize: calendar, backwards planning, accountability

Achievements:

- **Met:** 80% retention of Kindergarten teachers
- **On track:** 90% of K-2 student will be on/above grade level on FastBridge
- **Approaching:** 90% of K-2 students will be on/above grade level on FOR
- **Approaching:** 90% of teachers meet arc goal expectations for each arc

References

Latoya Spann
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(561) 255 – 0170
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KIPP Atlanta Deputy Chief Schools Officer
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Jthomas1@kippatl.org

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KCS Instructional Coach
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Joshua Garrett
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Vesnerdie Hodges
Instructional Educator/DI Coach
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Vesnerdie.hodges@ideapublicschools.org

Ebonee Wilson
Assistant Principal of Operations
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Ebonee.Wilson@ideapublicschools.org

Committees

Florida State Science Assessment

KCS & OCPS Math Textbook

Common Core

Budget

School Advisory Committee (SAC)

Lead Tutor

Community Partnerships - Grants

District Professional Development

Mentor & Teacher Development

Experience

Founding Assistant Principal of Instruction (K-2)
IDEA Victory Tampa (June 2021 – June 2024)

- Launching API grades K-2
- Grade Level Administrator and Manager:
    - 2021 – K & Testing Coordinator [11 direct reports]
    - 2022 – 2nd, 3rd, PE [16 direct reports]
    - (LEAD API) 2023 – 2nd, 3rd ELA/Reading, ESE, Testing Coordinator, Assistant Principal of Operations, and Co-manage API of K & 4 [14 direct reports]
- Roles: DI, CSI, and i-Ready point person, testing Coordinator
- Plan and lead Regional New Teacher Institute and New Leader Institute
- Manage School-based Content Managers
- Interview candidates – lead interview process and onboard new teachers
- Systems facilitated and led: academic pacing guides, testing plans , pep rally, monthly morning meetings, master schedule, content family engagement, student incentives, teacher appreciation, arrival and dismissal, morning huddles, attendance & retention meetings, enrollment, testing and rostering, interviews, lead team tactical meetings, meet the teacher
- Track student average daily attendance – contact and host parent conferences
- Lead data and strategy meeting with lead team and teachers
- Build teacher capacity through coaching cycle, teacher development check-ins, and lead team instructional rounds – develop level 4 and 5 teachers.

Achievements:

- 93% of teachers end year as a level 4 or 5 ratings in instruction and data.
- 92% of scholars in grades K-2 on track to be on grade level measured by Reading Mastery
- Highest teacher retention at 97.6% within the region
    - Launching year– hired 15/24 teachers, 80% retention of those 15 teachers hired
- 96% attrition of students all 3 years
- 92.3% attendance all 3 years
- Met enrollment by the 11th day of school all 3 years
- TNTP Top Survey Results Areas (highest results compared to all APIs in region):
    - 97% on credibility category – teachers felt I was dependable and trustworthy
    - 94% on positive environment – teachers felt safe and supported
    - 100% on staff development – teachers felt development was a priority
    - 92% on effective communication – teachers felt informed
- 2022 State Assessment:
    - Increased proficiency in Math from 2% to 46% from PM1 to PM3.
    - Increased proficiency in ELA from 7% to 29% from PM1 to PM3.
- 2023 State Assessment:
    - Increased proficiency in ELA from 12% to 51% from PM1 to PM3.

Leadership Competencies

Trusting Relationships

Developing and Managing People

Strategic Planning and Prioritization

Problem Solving and Decision Making

Driving Outcomes

Continuous Learning

Leading for Learning

Build Content Knowledge

Plan and Prioritize

Drive Instructional Coaching

Hire and Retain

Experience

District Administrator - Corrective Program/Math Program Specialist
Orlando, Florida (July 2019 – 2021) 2 years

- Serve as District Administration, lead 4 Corrective Program Elementary Schools, advise School Principals and manage school-base coaches.
- Develop math curriculum, resources, and assessments
- Roll out district-wide initiatives, collect data, advise School Leadership teams on next steps and system roll outs

Achievements:

- 4/4 schools increase math proficiency to 75+% in grade 3rd – 5th
- 3/4 schools graduated out of Corrective Programs District Support based on state school grade.

Elementary Teacher, Founding Elementary, & Eco Club Program Coordinator
Orlando, Florida (August 2015 – May 2019) – 4 years

- Taught K, 3rd, 4th, 5th
- Founding School leadership- grade chair, technology, instruction, behavior, data, tutor (math and reading), Saturday school, summer school, and mentor (teachers and college interns)
- Promote STEAM education – train, partner with community, grants, budget

Achievements:

- School rating increased from a D to a B
- 95% of scholars earned a level 3 or higher. 80% student growth.
- Students within program scored level 4 or 5 on FSA (state test)

Elementary Teacher (August 2005 – May 2015) – 10 years
Knoxville, TN

- Professional Development for Reading K-3 – instructional strategies, instructional pacing and best practices
- Leadership team: grade level chair, budget, technology, data team, parent engagement, summer school lead, and tutor lead
- Lead County Presenter for Kindergarten and Instructional Mentor for district
- Create C.A.R.E (district phonics program by Beverly Hutchison) powerpoints and activinspire presentations
- Taught grades K-5

Achievements:

- Received an overall 4.8/5.0 rating on evaluation and student achievement
- School rating increased from an F to a B.

STEAM School-based Leader (August 2010 – May 2015) – 5 years
Knoxville, TN

- Train teachers in the teaching/learning process of STEM/STEAM education
- Collaborate with leadership to improve instructional practices
- Assess and report schools' progress to the district
- District leader and professional development
- Curriculum writer grades K-5
- Monitor/Observe instructional practices and implementation

Achievements:

- School rating increased from an F rating to a B.
- Named top performing STEAM school in district.
- Lead school presenter at Magnet Schools of America

Loni M Vazquez-Hall

407-907-5479
lonimvazquez@gmail.com

Summary of Qualifications

I have over 25 years of history working for corporations that value me as an employee, with a focus on Management, Quality Assurance, Accounts Payable and Receivable, Process implementation, onboarding and recruitment, Administrative Assistant and Project Management. Currently an independent financial agent. My strengths center around mentoring and helping others achieve their goals both personal and financial

Employment History

New Heights leadership Development, Tennessee

Independent Financial Strategist February 2022 - Current

I am currently an independent agent for the New Heights Development team and working on opening my own brokerage by the end of 2025. I help families with anything related to finances and also always open to recruit and mentor agents who are interested in helping families as well and ready to grow their business and life.

The Parkes Companies/ Franklin, Tennessee

Administrative Assistant to Commercial Projects August 2021- January 2023

I am the Administrative Assistant to the Project Manager and Team Lead of the Commercial Construction division of Parkes Companies. I am involved in the process from Bidding the projects to closing them out. I handle accounting functions including entering invoices in View Point, paying subs, creating pay applications for the owners, as well as reviewing and filing legal contracts, change orders and anything that is requested of me from the very start of a project to the end when we hand the completed work over to the owner.

Mellick Construction–Mellick Group /Orlando, Florida

Commercial Project Accountant & Project Coordinator March 2020 -Current Project Coordinating for multiple commercial projects, ordering equipment and materials, managing a team of assistant project coordinators and sub-contractors, quality assurance reviews including job site visits, recruitment and interviewing of new hires and subcontractors, working with counsel on any projects whose contracts went into litigation, creating and implement new processes and training as well as all job duties as expected as the Commercial Project Accountant and coordinator. **Commercial Project Accountant** January 2019-March 2020

Reviewing contracts to create pay applications that are AIA compliant, billing according to percentage of completion and scope of work, entering all invoices and ensuring our subcontractors and vendors are paid, maintaining all subcontractor and vendor contracts and documents, paying all subcontractors and vendors in timely manner according to contracts, maintaining certificate of insurance

and liability documentation for all subcontractors and vendors and managing pay applications for each project monthly, conducting inventory audits and quality control.

Accounts Payable Supervisor January 2018-January 2019

Managing all incoming accounts for a large construction and roofing company, working closely with a team of subcontractors, onboarding of subcontractors, ensuring all paperwork is received and up to date according to regulations, creating invoices for individual construction jobs, entering and paying all invoices after a quality review and approval, cutting checks and paying invoices weekly, customer refunds and handling of credits, report management, quality control, monthly, quarterly and yearly book closings to ensure accurate reporting.

Diocese of Orlando/Orlando, Florida

Accounts Receivable & Faith Formation Coordinator August 2014 - May 2018 Created invoices for both the church and school, accounts receivable for a large Catholic Church including weekly collections and donations, managed money and the accounting books for both church and school including payroll for the teachers and office staff, completed faith formation registration for incoming classes, assisted with accounts payable for the church and all duties requested by management.

Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics/Orlando, Florida

Office Manager /Administrative and Executive Assistant June 2012 - June 2014 Managed over 25 individual office staff, handled all payroll, scheduling and time off, worked through Human Resources issues such as behavior, attendance and promotions, and recruitment, assisted my staff with patient scheduling, billing, verifying insurances, appealing denied claims, meeting financial goals set for the office, one on ones and goal setting with staff, payroll, office supply orders, managed the incoming inventory of prosthetics, created and facilitated all office meetings and quarterly town halls for the staff, completed interviews and hiring, traveled to multiple local sites to other support of new hires, training and ensure quality assurance, put together processes for implementation, helped create training manuals and facilitated training for multiple sites.

Congenital Heart Institute-Winnie Palmer /Orlando, Florida

Practice Manager March 2009- June 2011

Managing billers, medical coders and schedulers, scheduling appointments, worked closely with the physicians, patient/customer service, registration and insurance handling, managed the front line staff of employees, completed all payroll for the office staff and physicians,human resource contact for behavior, promotions, evaluations, yearly reviews and increases as well as quarterly bonus assignments.

Scheduler/Charge Entry Lead January 2008-March 2009

Entering charges, invoicing, customer service/patient care, scheduling, obtaining authorizations.

Unit Secretary May 2007 - January 2008

Entered medicine and test orders for treatment of NICU babies, helped RN's care for the babies by handling patient charts and admitting orders as well as any duties requested of me to ensure the proper care of the infants.

NSI- Orlando, Florida

Scheduler February 2005- April 2007

Scheduled patients and triaged them to ensure they were compatible with our MRI And CT

machines, cash handling, customer service/patient care.

West Orange Family Medical Care – Winter Garden, Florida

Referral Coordinator/Billing Clerk June 1996 - March 2005

Billing, invoicing, sending claims, insurance appeals, posting charges, balance adjustments and collections, specialist authorizations, customer service and patient care, cash handling, check in and check out.

Education

Aveda Institute/Winter Park, Florida 2010-2011 Cosmetology License Valencia Community College/Orlando, Florida 1997-2000 A.A. Degree West Orange High School/Winter Garden, Florida 1993-1997 High School Diploma

Fluent in Spanish

Attachment M Cover Page

Board Policies

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Board Policies Overview. The Board of Directors and its Board Officers hold the Charter and is an organized group of volunteers who, collectively, are legally and ethically accountable to the community and the state for the health, vitality, and effectiveness of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Governance encompasses legal responsibilities, general and academic oversight, planning and policy-making, and meeting fiduciary requirements. The responsibilities of the Board are as follows:

1. Support and advocate for the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
    1. Evaluate and review the stated mission and purpose that articulates the Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s goals, means, and primary constituents served.
    2. Establish a Board Policy Manual which contains policies used to effectively govern the organization to create a high-quality public charter school for students in Rutherford County, Tennessee.
2. Support and evaluate the Proposed Executive Director.
    1. Ensure the Proposed Executive Director is qualified for the position and has the moral and professional support necessary to further the stated mission and goals of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).
    2. Ensure effective planning in Academics, Development, Finance, and Governance.
3. Actively participate in the overall planning process and assist in implementing and monitoring Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s goals.
    1. Monitor and strengthen programs and services.
    2. Determine alignment of programming with the mission of the school and monitor effectiveness.
4. Ensure adequate financial resources are secured for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to fulfill the mission of providing all scholars access to rigorous curricula and high-quality academic instruction that fosters a love for learning, embraces innovation and creativity, and encourages personal growth to thrive in their chosen college and career paths, making a positive impact on society.
    1. Assist in developing the annual budget and ensure proper financial controls are in place.
    2. Protect assets and provide proper financial oversight.
5. Build a high-performing and competent board.
    1. Define prerequisites for candidates, orient new members, and annually evaluate the Board's performance.
    2. Ensure legal and ethical integrity.
    3. Ensure adherence of school to legal standards and ethical norms.
    4. Enhance Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s public standing.
    5. Clearly articulate Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and garner support from the community.

ARTICLE I: MISSION, LEGAL STATUS, AND NON DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Section 1.1. Mission, Vision and Principles of Design. Novus SMART Academy provides scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career begin in Kindergarten. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will achieve this mission through the integration of three key design elements:

1. **SMART-Integrated Curriculum Framework.** Our curriculum framework includes Science, Math, Arts, Research, and Technology, designed in alignment with Harvard University's Project Zero research. This innovative approach emphasizes deep learning, inquiry, and creativity across all disciplines to develop well-rounded, critical thinkers and problem-solvers through Inquiry-based Learning and Project-based Learning.
    1. Inquiry-based Learning promotes critical thinking and curiosity in reading, writing, and social studies through dynamic exploration in Science and Research.
        1. Science instruction will focus on hands-on experimentation and real-world problem-solving, equipping students with analytical and critical-thinking skills. For example, students in fourth grade may design and conduct experiments to understand renewable energy sources, applying mathematical calculations to measure their efficiency.
        2. Research in English/Language Arts and Social Studies will ignite intellectual curiosity and cultivate a lifelong love for learning. Students will learn how to ask meaningful questions, gather data, and present findings effectively. For instance, second graders might research ecosystems using digital tools, create artistic representations, and present their findings through multimedia presentations.
    2. Project-Based Learning (PBL) develops scholars' practical problem-solving skills in Science, Math, and Technology through hands-on projects.
        1. Math instruction will focus on hands-on experimentation and real-world problem-solving, equipping students with analytical and critical-thinking skills. For example, students in fourth grade may design and conduct experiments to understand renewable energy sources, applying mathematical calculations to measure their efficiency.
        2. Technology instruction will embed digital literacy and technological fluency to prepare students for innovation-driven futures. Students will use technology to access information, collaborate with

peers, and develop solutions to complex problems. This integration ensures that technology is not just a tool but a fundamental part of the learning process.

2. **College and Career Exploration.** Preparation for college and career pathways begins as early as Kindergarten. Through inquiry-based and project-based learning, students will gain exposure to the importance of education in shaping their futures.
    1. Kindergarten: Students explore foundational questions such as “What is a College?” by learning about local institutions and building a career vocabulary.
    2. Grades 3-5: Students delve into themes like “College and Career Pathways,” engaging in hands-on projects that simulate real-world challenges in STEAM fields. For example, fifth-grade students might design a sustainable city prototype, integrating their knowledge of the SMART disciplines while practicing teamwork, research, and presentation skills.
    3. Grades 6-8: Scholars participate in advanced projects and career simulations, such as coding applications, engineering prototypes, and creating digital art portfolios, aligned with their interests and emerging career aspirations.
3. **Character Education through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Well-Being.** Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a cornerstone of student success at Novus SMART Academy. We prioritize emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills through structured SEL activities.
    1. SEL Through Asset-Based Learning: Students’ unique strengths are leveraged to build confidence and a growth mindset. For example, during a “Kindness Challenge,” students create appreciation cards for local healthcare workers, demonstrating emotional growth and community impact.
        1. The Arts, including visual art and music, are seamlessly integrated into the curriculum to inspire creativity and self-expression while deepening students' academic understanding. Through hands-on experiences such as creating original artwork, performing in theatrical/musical productions, and exploring digital design projects, students will connect artistic expression with core academic concepts, fostering a well-rounded and enriched learning experience.
        2. Daily Practices: Morning meetings will focus on empathy, gratitude, and self-regulation. Weekly character education lessons emphasize the Novus Core Values and celebrate their connection to academic and personal achievements.
4. **Structured English Immersion Program.** Our Structured English Immersion program will provide identified English language learners with support for English language acquisition as follows:
    1. Grades K-2: Focus on vocabulary, oral language development, phonemic awareness, and fluency, with strategies like sentence frames and visual prompts.
    2. Grades 3-5: Emphasis on academic vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension strategies to decode and analyze texts.
    3. Grades 6-8: Advanced grammar structures, morphology, and syntax are integrated to enhance academic discourse and comprehension of complex texts.

Our mission also aligns with T.C.A. § 49-13-104 by focusing on improving academic performance and will serve a diverse scholar population, including at least 70% economically disadvantaged scholars, 25% scholars with disabilities, and 35% English language learners (ELL), some of which will participate in our Structured English Immersion program. We aim to close the achievement gap across all demographics, ensuring that every scholar, regardless of background or ability, achieves academic growth and develops the character needed for long-term success.

Vision Statement. Novus SMART Academy produces global achievers through high-quality academic instruction, character development, and relentless ambition for success in life. This vision aligns with Rutherford County Schools’ 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, emphasizing early intervention to ensure every scholar thrives academically and personally. Our approach incorporates the OECD’s principle that quality is essential for educational excellence. Specifically, our mission and vision are clearly aligned to the overall purpose of T.C.A. § 49-13-104: to implement an academic focus and academic plan that will improve learning in **S**cience, **M**ath, **A**rts/Electives, **R**esearch, and **T**echnology for all scholars, and to close the achievement gap between high-achieving and low-achieving scholars. The Proposed Executive Director will conduct searches using platforms like EdReports.org to ensure our curricula are aligned to Tennessee Academic Standards and will select research-based curricula that are recommended by the Tennessee Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission. As we monitor academic progress, our instructional leadership team will make needs-based adaptations to the curricula in response to data.

The Tennessee School Report Card data from the 2023-2024 school year reveal the graduation rate in Rutherford County Schools is 96.2% (the statewide average is 90.6%). All three of the high schools in La Vergne and Smyrna exceeded the graduation rate for the state of Tennessee; however, one of the high schools fell below the graduation rate for the district (96.2%), which also includes scholars and families enrolled in the virtual school option. Even with high graduation rates, a low percentage of graduating scholars are leaving high school below grade-level in math and reading. Figures 5-9 display comparisons of the math, reading, science, and social studies proficiency scores of the state of Tennessee as a whole and of Rutherford County Schools and operating charter schools in La Vergne and Smyrna, which is the community from which Novus SMART Academy (K-8) intends to draw students. The figures also include a summary of demographic profiles, including ethnicity, economic disadvantage, scholars with disabilities, and English language learners. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adopt the strategic priorities to provide early interventions that address scholars’ academic needs and support the whole child. We see an opportunity to provide high-quality academic instruction with extended time and blended learning in literacy and math using a strategic two-teacher model, responding to the gap between high-achieving and low-achieving scholars in this community beginning in Grades K-1.

Additionally, WKRN reported that hundreds of scholars in Rutherford County will likely change schools over the next couple of years after the school board voted to approve the countywide rezoning plan. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) sees an opportunity to partner with Rutherford County Schools to provide an additional school option for scholars and families that could keep families in their preferred communities with access to the conveniences they deserve, appreciate, and in several cases, need. Although Rutherford County Schools' rezoning plan may allow schools to transition most scholars from portables into brick-and-mortar school buildings with available seats, as stated by Director of Schools Dr. James Sullivan, uprooting scholars and families from their current schools may not be convenient for all family dynamics.

Section 1.2 School Legal Status. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is proposed to be a Rutherford County Schools District public charter school. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will operate pursuant to a charter being granted by Rutherford County Schools, a department of the Tennessee Department of Education, upon charter application approval. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is a public school, and its status as a nonprofit corporation does not affect its status as a public school. However, for governance, finance, and administrative purposes, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) operates as a Tennessee nonprofit corporation. Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s Articles of Incorporation (Attachment H) and non-profit status (Attachment I) are provided as addendum to this manual.

Section 1.3 Non-Discrimination Policy. The Board officers, Directors, Committee members, employees, and persons served by Novus SMART Academy (K-8) shall be selected entirely on a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to age, sex, race, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. It is the policy of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) not to discriminate based on race, creed, ancestry, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, age physical ability, veteran's status, political service or affiliation, color, religion, or national origin in admissions, hiring, selection or appointment to any office.

Article II: THE BOARD

Section 2.1 Decision Making. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has been created to serve scholars. All decisions by the Board of Directors and the school leadership team should be made within the parameters of the mission and vision of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), always keeping in mind the interest of the scholars and families served.

Section 2.2 Policy Making. The Board shall be solely responsible for adopting, repealing or amending policies for Novus SMART Academy (K-8). Action by the Board shall be accomplished as set forth in the By-laws. Except in cases of special need, the Board shall follow the following procedure in adopting, repealing or amending policies at Novus SMART Academy (K-8):

1. **First Reading**. The proposed policy shall be submitted for approval on first reading at a regular meeting or special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. The proposed policy shall be contained in the Board packet distributed prior to the meeting. At first reading, the Board shall receive public comment and comments from the sponsor of the proposed policy. A vote of the Board will be taken after the reading, and if the amendment receives a simple majority vote of the Directors present at the meeting, it will be placed on the agenda for a second reading at the next meeting of the Board.
2. **Second Reading.** If the proposed policy is approved on first reading, it will be placed on the agenda and considered at the next regular meeting or special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. No amendment shall be adopted at second reading unless the amendment receives a two-thirds (⅔) vote of the Directors present at the meeting. If the proposed policy is adopted upon second reading it shall become a policy of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), and the Policy Manual shall be amended accordingly.
3. **Special Need**. Upon a two-thirds (⅔) vote of the Directors present at a regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose, a special need may be declared. If a special need is declared, a policy may be adopted on first reading. A proposed policy should reference the policy provision it will be amending. Ideally, the entire policy will be reprinted with new language in all caps, and language to be deleted lined out. New policies should include the proposed table of contents, policy title, and code number.

Section 2.3 Board Review of Administrative Procedures. The Board recognizes its role of ensuring the fiscal and organizational health of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) through oversight and continuous progress monitoring. The Proposed Executive Director shall be responsible for the daily administration of affairs of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and shall manage all activities of the school as prescribed by the Board. The Board need not review administrative policies and regulations in advance of issuance except as required by law. The Board should approve in advance any highly sensitive matters of policy and/or regulations that have the potential to impact its duties and obligations to Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and/or the Tennessee Department of Education. To that end, the Proposed Executive Director shall exercise discretion to identify and bring to the Board's attention any such policies and regulations prior to issuance. Administrative policies and regulations should reference existing Board policy when applicable. The Board reserves the right to review administrative policies and regulations at its discretion. However, the Board shall revise or veto such regulations only when, in its judgment, such regulations are inconsistent with the Board's policies.

Section 2.4 Summary of Tennessee Open Meeting Law. The Board will abide by the Open Meeting Law prescribed in Tennessee Law. The Open Meetings Act, commonly referred to as the "Sunshine Law," is found in T.C.A. § 8-44-101 et seq. Any action taken in a meeting in violation of any of the foregoing requirements is void. T.C.A. § 8-44-105. The requirements of this law are as follows:

1. All meetings of any governing body are declared to be public meetings and must be always open to the public. T.C.A. § 8-44-102.
2. Adequate public notice of all regular and special meetings must be given. T.C.A. § 8-44-103.

3. The minutes of the meetings must be recorded and open to public inspection and at a minimum must contain a record of the persons present, all motions, proposals and resolutions offered, the results of any votes taken, and a record of individual votes in the event of a roll call. T.C.A. § 8-44- 104(a).
4. All votes must be by public vote, public ballot, or public roll call; secret votes are prohibited. T.C.A. § 8-44-104(b).

Section 2.5 Board Attendance Policy and Purpose. This policy was developed with the recognition that Board membership is voluntary and that individual members contribute their time and energy in different ways. Because Board meetings are the only forum during which the Board can discuss and vote on major school policies and decisions, attendance at these meetings carries special importance. All Board members will receive a copy of this policy to ensure that everyone is properly informed about the expectations for Board attendance.

1. **Definitions.** "Notified" Absence: For absence to be "notified," a Board member must notify the person running the meeting (usually the Board Chair or Board Vice Chair) by 12:00 pm the day of the meeting that he/she will be absent. "Unnotified" Absence: For absence to be "unnotified," a Board member failed to notify the person running the meeting (usually the Board Chair or Board Vice Chair) by 12:00 pm of the meeting day that s/he will be absent.
2. **Unsatisfactory Attendance**. If any of the following conditions exist, an individual board member will be considered to have unsatisfactory attendance: (1) the member has two "unnotified" absences in a row; (2) the member has three "notified" absences in a row; or (3) the member misses one third (⅓) of the total number of Board meetings during one of their term years.
3. **Process for Responding to Unsatisfactory Attendance.** The Board Vice Chair will keep track of Board member attendance through Board meeting minutes and will provide this information to the Board Chair. The Board Chair will directly contact a Board member at risk of potentially violating the policy to issue both verbal and written warning as well as to discuss any challenges and/or problems. If a Board member does violate the policy, the Board Chair will bring this to the Board's attention for discussion, after which point a majority vote will be held to determine possible Board termination.

Section 2.5 Public Attendance at Board Meetings. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will provide opportunities for any member of the community to express interest in and concern for the school. Accordingly, all community members will have access and be notified well in advance of all open meetings of the Board. A scheduled time for public comment shall be a part of every regular Board meeting. The Board reserves the right to establish reasonable time limits for such public comment. Meetings are closed to the public only when the Board is meeting in executive session. An executive session may be called only to discuss matters not appropriate for public discussion, as defined under Tennessee law. An executive session may be called only upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds (⅔) of the quorum present. No formal action of the Board may be taken in any executive session. Persons who wish to make requests, presentations, or proposals to the Board should direct any inquiry to the Proposed Executive Director, who will respond according to the following procedures:

1. The Proposed Executive Director will consult with the Board Chair and, if appropriate, other Board members about including the request on the agenda for the next regularly-scheduled Board meeting.
2. If the item is included on the agenda, the Board will receive in their packet for the next regularly-scheduled meeting written information directly from the person making the request.
3. If specific Board action is being requested, that action should be in the written document.
4. The person may present their information orally to the Board when the agenda item is discussed.
5. The Board reserves the right to establish reasonable time limits for public comment and presentations.
6. Notice of Board meetings shall be posted in the school offices and on the school website at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and in full compliance with all public meeting laws in the state of Tennessee.

Section 2.7 Standing Committee Meetings.

1. The purpose of the Academics Committee is to work with the Proposed Executive Director to define academic achievement, ensure that all Board members know the charter promises made to the community and the authorizer, and to devise clear and consistent measures to monitor enrollment, student demographics, and achievement of academic outcomes.
2. The purpose of the Development Committee is to ensure that the organization's total development program is in concert with the organization's strategic direction and needs. The Committee serves as the mechanism by which Board members and other volunteers are involved in the fundraising process.
3. The purpose of the Finance Committee is to work with the Proposed Executive Director to create the upcoming fiscal year budget and recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the organization's assets.
4. The purpose of the Governance Committee is to build and maintain an effective Board for Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Section 2.8 Task Force Committees. The Novus SMART Academy (K-8) Board of Directors reserves, per its By-laws, the ability to appoint ad-hoc committees of an advisory nature regarding pertinent business of the Board composed of Board members or community members appointed by the Board.

Section 2.9 Board Fundraising Policy. The Board of Directors is a 100% giving Board. Board members are expected to give an annual monetary gift to Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and are asked to make Novus SMART Academy (K-8) a priority in their personal giving. Board members are expected to be involved in fundraising by using their personal and professional connections when appropriate, by soliciting funds when appropriate, by serving on fundraising committees, and by attending fundraising events.

Section 2.10 Board Election Procedures. The Governance Committee shall prepare and submit to the Board a report of the nominees it recommends for election to the Board. The number of seats available shall be determined in accordance with the

By-laws. Whenever possible, nominated board member credentials will be presented one meeting prior to their election. Board members will be elected by a two-thirds (⅔) vote of the quorum present at the meeting during which elections are held. Each Director shall serve from the next scheduled Board meeting after the election until the end of his or her term as determined by the Board.

Section 2.11 Board Self Evaluation. Efficient and effective performance of the Board can have a significant impact on the school's success and is an essential component of competent governance. The Board, through guidance of the Governance Committee, will conduct an annual assessment of its own services. This Committee shall determine the format of the assessment and must include a formal written survey and self-assessment tool. The evaluation process should be designed to encourage constructive feedback aimed towards continuous improvement.

2.12 Indemnification Policy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will purchase and maintain Directors and Officers Liability Insurance (D&O), liability insurance payable to the Directors and Board Officers of a corporation, or to the organization itself, as indemnification (reimbursement) for losses or advancement of defense costs if insured suffers such a loss because of legal action brought for alleged wrongful acts in capacity as directors and officers. The corporation will not provide indemnification for items arising from an individual's participation in excess benefit or self-dealing transaction. Indemnification may be denied in a proceeding brought by or on behalf of the corporation (except for expenses), if it is determined that the indemnitee did not meet the standard of conduct required. This indemnification includes expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding if he/she acted in good faith and in a matter they reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). With respect to criminal action or proceeding, he/she must have had no reasonable cause to believe conduct was unlawful.

ARTICLE III: ETHICS

Section 3.1 Confidentiality Policy. It is the policy of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) that Directors and employees may not disclose, divulge, or make accessible confidential information belonging to, or obtained through their affiliation with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) to any person, including relatives, friends and business and professional associates, other than to persons who have a legitimate need for such information and to whom Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has authorized disclosure. Directors and employees shall use confidential information solely for the purpose of performing services as a Director or employee for Novus SMART Academy (K-8). This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure where disclosure is required by law; however, Directors must always exercise good judgment and care to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places, such as restaurants, elevators, and airplanes, should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. In addition, Directors and employees should be sensitive to the risk of inadvertent disclosure and should for example, refrain from leaving confidential information on desks or otherwise in plain view and refrain from the use of speaker phones to discuss confidential information if the conversation could be heard by unauthorized persons. At the end of a Director's term in office or upon termination of an employee's employment, he or she shall return, at the request of Novus SMART Academy (K-8), all documents, papers, and other materials, regardless of medium, which may contain or be derived from confidential information, in his/her possession.

ARTICLE IV: LEADERSHIP

Section 4.1 Proposed Executive Director Policy. The Board shall rely on its Chair and the Proposed Executive Director to provide professional and administrative leadership. The Proposed Executive Director shall be hired by and report directly to the Board. The Proposed Executive Director will be responsible for the daily administration of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s affairs and will manage and direct all activities of the organization as prescribed by the Board. The Proposed Executive Director will have the power to hire and discharge employees of the school and will oversee and direct their activities in carrying out the work of the school. The Proposed Executive Director is the Board's only link to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Proposed Executive Director. The Proposed Executive Director will, directly or indirectly, supervise all other staff members employed by the Novus SMART Academy (K-8) and is responsible for selecting staff members, conducting staff evaluations, and recommending compensation levels. Accordingly:

1. The Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Proposed Executive Director.
2. The Board will refrain from evaluating any staff other than the Proposed Executive Director.
3. The Board will use the performance of the school as a primary indicator of the Proposed Executive Director's performance.
4. **Annual Proposed Executive Director Performance Evaluation.** Charter schools receive autonomy over fiscal management and the academic program in exchange for accountability, which measures the school's attainment of specific mission-oriented academic, operational, and governance goals. The Board of Directors' key responsibility is to manage the school through the performance of the Proposed Executive Director of Novus SMART Academy (K-8). There are three core purposes of the evaluation as follows:
    1. to recognize areas of particular strength and success;
    2. to identify areas for improvement and/or focus,
    3. to articulate areas for improvement and/or focus,
    4. to inform the Board's request for a plan of action from the Proposed Executive Director that addresses how the goals in the charter will be met.

Annually, the Board will convene an ad hoc Proposed Executive Director Evaluation Committee, to consist of three members of the Board to include the Board Chair, Board Treasurer, and a member of the Academics Committee. The Evaluation

Committee will conduct the evaluation in accordance with its Proposed Executive Director Evaluation Protocol, which provides guidelines for how to gather information to inform the evaluation, a timeline for evaluation activities that aligns with the school year, and what to include in the written evaluation.

Section 4.2 Leadership Sustainability Policy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will have a sustainability policy that:

1. Ensures ongoing and continuous development of leadership capacity at the Proposed Executive Director and Board levels.
2. Responds in a timely and effective manner to an emergency leadership transition.
3. Responds in a timely and effective manner to a planned leadership transition.

ARTICLE V: MEDIA POLICY

This Media Policy applies to all employees of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) as well as members of the Board of Directors. This policy covers all external news media including broadcast, electronic, and print. To ensure the quality and consistency of organizational information disseminated to media sources, the following policy shall be enforced:

1. All media contacts are to be handled by the Proposed Executive Director in collaboration with the Board Chair and the Public Relations member of the Board, or designee, regardless of who the media representative is or who represents or how innocuous the request.
2. All press releases or other promotional materials are to be approved by the Proposed Executive Director in collaboration with the Board Chair and the Public Relations member of the Board, or designee prior to dissemination.
3. If a reporter, producer, or other news media person should contact an employee of Novus SMART Academy (K-8) or a member of the Board of Directors, the individual who is contacted should refer the media person to the Proposed Executive Director.

ARTICLE VI: FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

Section 6.1 Fiscal Policy Development. The Board will ratify, annually review, and maintain a separate Fiscal Policy Manual to cover the robust breadth and depth of fiscal compliance and governance Novus SMART Academy (K-8). This Policy Manual will contain clear policies to provide for legal compliance, best practices in alignment with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and best-in-class fiscal governance. To establish these policies, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will consult with a back-office provider in creating a draft financial policy handbook which will ultimately be approved by the Board. The policies and procedures will detail the internal institutional controls necessary in reporting, procurement, purchasing, and all transactional approvals. The Proposed Executive Director, Board Treasurer, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will serve as the three (3) chief financial agents of the organization. All processes requiring the disbursement and management of funds will require the proper segregation of duties and double approvals necessary to ensure fiscal oversight, and compliance with the law and GAAP. Minimally, the policies will outline:

1. Preparation of financial statements such as Balance Sheets, Cash Flow, YTD Actuals to ensure timely, accurate review by the Finance Committee and Board of Directors;
2. Budgeting creating and approval process which allow for thorough review by the Finance Committee and approval for timely submission to the authorizer;
3. Securing a reputable auditor, and engaging in an annual audit;
4. Bank account management and segregation of duties between issuing and signing checks, opening and closing accounts, and completing monthly reconciliations;
5. Petty cash management policy and deposit policy;
6. Contracting and RFP thresholds processes and policies;
7. Purchasing controls and segregation of duties.
8. The Proposed Executive Director and Board Treasurer will collaborate with a back-office provider to create a draft financial policy manual, to be reviewed by the Finance Committee and ultimately approved by the Board.

Section 6.2 Purchasing. Any equipment with an estimated value of $10,000 or more shall be purchased through competitive bidding or comparative pricing by at least three vendors whenever possible per Tennessee state legislation. Comparative pricing or competitive bidding should also be used periodically for regularly-purchased materials, supplies, services, and insurance.

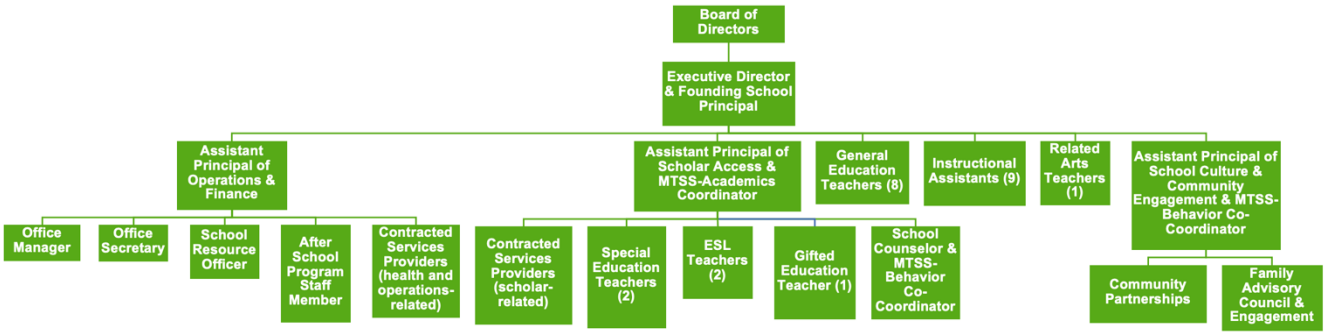
Section 6.3 Property. The Board Chair in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director and Board Treasurer must approve the purchase or disposition of any asset with a value of $10,000 or less. The purchase or sale of any asset of higher value shall be approved by the Board. Purchase or sale of any real estate must be approved by the Board.

Section 6.4 Risk Management Policy. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to protecting its human, financial, and goodwill assets and resources through the practice of effective risk management. The Board of Directors and management are dedicated to safeguarding the safety and dignity of its paid and volunteer staff, its clients, and anyone who has contact with the organization. To this end, the Board will ensure that the organization has a risk management plan for the organization that is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Attachment N Cover Page

Organizational Chart: Year 1

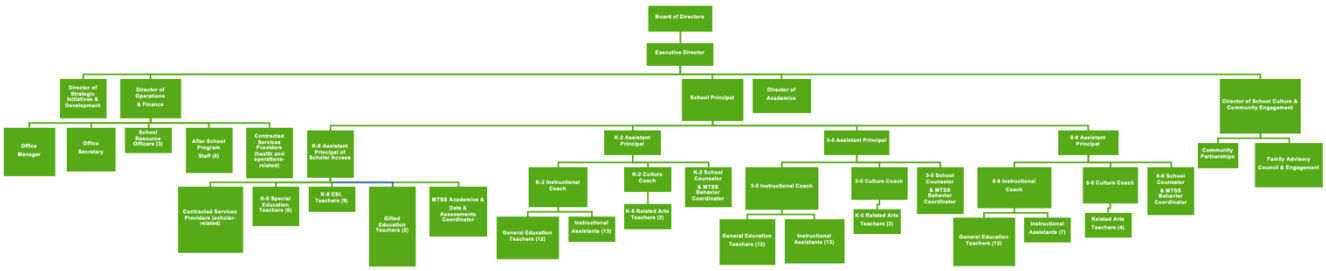
REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS



Attachment O Cover Page

Organizational Chart: Full Capacity

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS



Attachment P Cover Page

School Leader Resume *(if hired)*

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Jeremy Sager, Ed.D.

901.210.4519 ∗ E-mail: jdsager85@gmail.com ∗ LinkedIn: Click Here

Career Objective

To serve in an executive leadership role that supports scholars and families, teachers and school leaders, and staff and community members with equity-centered support that drives achievement with sustainable results for all stakeholders.

Education

Crichton College-Memphis, Tennessee
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Secondary English Education (Cum Laude)
- 407 Professional Tennessee License in English 7-12

Union University-Germantown, Tennessee
- Master of Education Degree (with Honors)

University of Tennessee at Martin-Martin, Tennessee
- 442 ILL-P Professional Tennessee License in Administrator PreK-12

Walden University-Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Doctor of Education in Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning (with Honors)
- Dissertation Focus: Teachers' Perceptions of Implementing the Collaborative Problem-Solving Model
- 090 Superintendent Tennessee License

Work Experience

Stride K12 **July 2024 to Present**
- Virtual Elementary School Principal at Volunteer State Virtual Academy

Build. Excel. Sustain. **August 2023 to July 2024**
- BES Fellow

Metro Nashville Public Schools **December 2022 to August 2023**
- Lead Literacy Specialist for the Schools of Innovation

Republic Charter Schools **June 2021 to December 2022**
- Middle School Principal at Nashville Prep
- TVAAS Level 5 School
- Reward School Status

Gestalt Community Schools **July 2018 to May 2021**
- Ninth Grade Academy Principal at Power Center Academy High School (July 2020 to Present).
- Coached English I and moved the TVAAS growth status from a Level 3 to a Level 5 in one school year.
- Dean of Instruction at Power Center Academy Middle School-Hickory Hill Campus (July 2018 to June 2020).

LEAD Public Schools **August 2017 to June 2018**
- Upper School Dean of Instruction at LEAD Neely's Bend.
- Helped to move the TVAAS growth status from a Level 1 to a Level 5 in one school year.

Gestalt Community Schools **June 2016 to July 2017**
- Resident Leader at Power Center Academy Middle School-Hickory Hill Campus.
- Provided instructional support to six ELA teachers who scored a Level 5 in school-wide Literacy for TVAAS.
- Successful completion of the RELAY Graduate School of Education National Principals Academy Fellowship.

Arkansas State University Mid-South **August 2012 to May 2014**
- Part-time Adjunct Professor for Developmental English I/II

Jeremy Sager, Ed.D.

901.210.4519 ⋆ E-mail: jdsager85@gmail.com ⋆ LinkedIn: Click Here

Shelby County Schools **August 2010 to May 2016**

- District Instructional Literacy Coach (September 2015 to May 2016).
- PLC Coach at Treadwell Middle School (October 2014 to September 2015).
- Successful completion of the Emerging Leaders Program with New Leaders for New Schools in May 2015.
- Curriculum & Instruction Team Writer for English 9-12 (Summer 2012, Summer 2013).
- English I (Standard and Honors) Teacher at Craigmont High School (August 2010 to October 2014).

Leadership Capacity

- Track record of strong school leadership and management of adult learning practices with high impact on personnel, operations, systems, and routines.
- Manage multiple projects successfully by exceeding objectives and milestones.
- High level of energy, determination and perseverance to act as an agent of change.
- Maintain strong and professional relationships with staff, students and parents with a focus on supporting and celebrating diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Provide social-emotional learning and support to teachers and scholars using Collaborative Problem-Solving.
- Manage complex relationships and work with diverse communities, management styles, and personalities.
- Strong oral and written communication skills with the demonstrated ability to learn quickly.
- Passion for improving urban public education and a long-term commitment to K-12 public education.
- Deep knowledge of Tennessee Academic Standards and College and Career Standards for student learning.
- Mastery of appropriate content-specific, pedagogical knowledge and related research and best practices.
- Strong analytic and problem-solving skills, with the ability to understand and analyze complex data to identify strengths and opportunities.
- Use, implement and manage learning management systems (LMS); proficiency in Google Suite, Microsoft Office Suite, and use of Monday.com.
- Use of evaluations, feedback and data to inform practices that improve performance outcomes align to mission, vison, core values, and goals.
- Ability to collaborate with stakeholders and identify needs to plan and implement strategies for improvement.
- Ability to design and facilitate effective professional learning activities and development to include conferencing, co-planning, conducting classroom observations and providing feedback, modeling best practices, leading demonstration lessons, coteaching, analyzing data, and supporting inquiry and reflection.

Community & Organizational Affiliations, Services, & Awards

Golden Gate Cathedral-Memphis **August 2010 to August 2013**

- Youth Ministry Coordinator/Team Leader (Volunteer Position)

Shelby-Memphis Council of Teachers of English Member **August 2010 to May 2014**

- Recipient of 2012 Judith Calvert Warren Outstanding New Teacher Award

NAACP ACT-SO Competition Member **August 2011 to July 2017**

- Humanities Chairman

National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) **January 2020 to Present**

- Active membership with Walden University.

New Memphis Fellows Member **September 2020 to September 2021**

- Alumnus of the Fellows Program.

Marquis Who's Who in America **July 2021**

- Top Professionals Recipient
- Millennium Magazine Front Cover Feature

Jeremy Sager, Ed.D.

901.210.4519 ∗ E-mail: jdsager85@gmail.com ∗ LinkedIn: Click Here

Golden Key International Honor Society — **October 2021 to Present**

- Active membership with Walden University.

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools — **May 2022**

- Public Charter School Changemaker Award

100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee — **September 2022 to Present**

ForbesBLK Community Membership — **August 2023 to Present**

Attachment Q Cover Page

Insurance Coverage

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Attachment Q: Insurance Coverage

Ross Yerger
INSURE THE FUTURE

JACKSON TUPELO HATTIESBURG NEW ORLEANS MEMPHIS

To Rutherford County Schools School Board, State of Tennessee

Re: Novus SMART Academy

This "Will Serve Letter" is for Novus SMART Academy in area of Rutherford County Schools District and Smyrna and LaVergne, TN. Once approved and authorized to serve in Rutherford County Schools District and the State of Tennessee insurance coverage will be bound for coverage. GuideOne Insurance (A.M. Best Rated A-) and Travelers Insurance (A.M. Best Rated A+) will provide Workers Compensation and the Commercial Insurance Package for Novus SMART Academy that specifically covers the exposures within the education industry per the charter requirements of Rutherford County Schools School Board and the State of Tennessee.

The business policy will be provided by the carriers below:

- General Liability/Automobile/Excess (Umbrella):
  - GuideOne Insurance Company (A.M. Best Rated A-)
- Directors & Officers/School Board/Educators Legal Liability/Sexual Abuse and Molestation:
  - GuideOne Insurance Company (A.M. Best Rated A-)
- Property
  - GuideOne Insurance Company (A.M. Best Rated A-)
- Workers Compensation
  - Accident Fund Insurance Company (A.M. Best Rated A)
- Surety Bond/Crime Coverage
  - Travelers Insurance Company (A.M. Best Rated A+)

The insurance provider will notify the Tennessee Department of Education within ten (10) days of the cancellation of any insurance it carries on the charter school, pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-107(b)(19)

Coverages are quoted for binding but not enforced.

Please call me with any questions.

Thank you,

Marcus Burger
Vice President/Shareholder
Education Division Practice Group Leader
601-944-9701

Charter School Insurance Needs

Per the 2025 State of Tennessee and Rutherford County Schools District as Authorizers of Charter Schools request for proposals, we have outlined an insurance program that is needed for coverage for your charter school and when polices should begin. Limits are an example and will vary with each school based on coverage needs.

Coverage	Description	Limits
Building, Business Personal Property, Business Income & Extra Expense, Equipment Breakdown	Blanket Limits as needed by School (Special Form, Replacement Cost, Agreed Value)	
General Liability	General Aggregate	2,000,000
	Products/Completed Ops Aggregate	2,000,000
	Personal/Advertising Injury	1,000,000
	Each Occurrence Limit	1,000,000
	Fire Damage	300,000
	Medical Expense	15,000
Educators Protection Plus Professional Liability (Educators Legal Liability)	Professional Aggregate	1,000,000
	Defense Reimbursement – Aggregate	300,000
	Occurrence	100,000
Violent Event Response	Aggregate Limit	1,000,000
	Each Violent Event Limit	1,000,000

Additional Insureds/Loss Payees:
Our policies will include the Charter Authorizer, their respective members, officers, employees, officials and agents as additional insureds on the Directors and Officers policy. In addition, our General Liability policy includes blanket Additional Insureds status for Managers or Lessors or Premises; By Contract, Agreement or Permit. Loss Payees can be added as to the property policy upon our review of the lease contracts.

Tentative Timeline for Insurance Coverages
As part of your planning process, we have prepared a timeline for buying the insurance package before start of the school year. See below for each coverage:

Coverage	Timeline
Directors and Officers/Educators Legal Liability	As soon as board is formed and making school based decisions (contracts)
Employment Practices Liability	Before first employee is hired
Workers' Compensation	When first employee is hired or board is formed
General Liability, Excess, Crime, Cyber, Sexual Abuse, Auto Liability, Student Accident (please ask for this separately if you would like the coverage)	When lease agreement is signed or property is purchased (landlord will require General Liability coverage)
Property/Flood	As soon as you acquire contents/school equipment

Attachment R Cover Page

CMO Agreement

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 6

Attachment R – Page

Attachment S Cover Page

Network Annual Progress Report

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Attachment T Cover Page

Organizational Chart: Year 1

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED "YES" TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 3

Attachment U Cover Page

Organizational Chart: Year 5
REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 3

Attachment U – Page

Attachment V Cover Page

Previously Approved and Authorized Application for School Being Replicated
REQUIRED IF ANSWERED "YES" TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 4

Attachment W Cover Page

Operating Budget Template

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

NOTE: Sponsors must submit the completed Operating Budget Template as a separate document.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)

Charter School Creation Application Operating Budget Template

Proposed School Information

Proposed School Name	Novus SMART Academy (K-8)
Lead Sponsor Name	Jeremy Sager
Lead Sponsor E-mail Address	jsager@novusSMARTaademy.org
Lead Sponsor Phone Number	615-663-9680
CMO/EMO Affiliation	Not Applicable

Proposed Authorizer	Rutherford County
Geographic District*	Rutherford County
Proposed Opening Grade Level(s)	K-1
Proposed Final Grade Level(s)	K-8
Proposed First Year of Operations	2026-27

**"Geographic District" means the school district that serves the geographic location in which the proposed charter school will operate.*

Student & Staff Counts

Student Enrollment Summary

	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Pre-Kindergarten *	0	0	0	0	0
Kindergarten	96	96	96	96	96
1st Grade	96	96	96	96	96
2nd Grade	0	96	96	96	96
3rd Grade	0	0	96	96	96
4th Grade	0	0	0	96	96
5th Grade	0	0	0	0	96
6th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
7th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
8th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
9th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
10th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
11th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
12th Grade	0	0	0	0	0
Total Enrollment *(excluding Pre-Kindergarten)*	192	288	384	480	576
Change in Net Enrollment	192	96	96	96	96

*****Pre-K funding is not included in the State and Local funding in this budget template, and Pre-K enrollment is excluded from the Total Enrollment student counts. If the school serves Pre-K students, sponsors must indicate the funding used to do so on the "3. Revenues" sheet and include related costs on the "4. Expenditures" sheet within this template.*

Staff FTE Counts**						
Object Code and Line-item Description	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
104 - Principal(s)	1	1	1	1	1	1
105 - Supervisor / Director	0	0	0	0	0	0
113 - Internal Audit Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
116 - Teachers - Classroom Teachers (core subjects)	0	8	12	16	20	24
116 - Teachers - Classroom Teachers (electives, world languages)	0	1	2	3	4	4
116 - Teachers - Special Education Teachers	0	2	3	4	5	6
116 - Teachers - English as a Second Language (ESL) Teachers	0	2	3	4	5	6
116 - Teachers - Other Teachers (must add assumption notes)	0	1	1	1	1	1
116 - Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
118 - Secretary to Board	0	0	0	0	0	0
119 - Accountants/Bookkeepers	1	1	1	1	1	1
120 - Computer Programmer(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
121 - Data Processing Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
122 - Purchasing Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
123 - Guidance Personnel	0	1	1	2	2	2
124 - Psychological Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
128 - Homebound Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
129 - Librarian(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
130 - Social Workers	0	0	0	0	0	0
131 - Medical Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
132 - Material Supervisor(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
135 - Assessment Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
136 - Audiovisual Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
137 - Education Media Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
138 - Instructional Computer Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
139 - Assistant Principal(s)	3	3	4	5	5	5
142 - Mechanic(s)	0	0	0	0	0	0
146 - Bus Drivers	0	0	0	0	0	0
160 - Guards	0	0	0	0	0	0
161 - Secretary(s)	0	1	1	1	1	1
162 - Clerical Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
163 - Educational Assistants	0	9	13	17	21	25
164 - Attendants	0	0	0	0	0	0
165 - Cafeteria Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
166 - Custodial Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
167 - Maintenance Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
169 - Part-time Personnel	0	1	2	6	7	7
170 - School Resource Officer	0	1	1	2	2	2
171 - Speech Pathologist	0	0	0	0	0	0
189 - Other Salaries & Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0
195 - Certified Substitute Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
198 - Non-certified Substitute Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	**5**	**32**	**45**	**63**	**75**	**85**

***Schools that serve Pre-K students should include Pre-K staff in the provided staff counts within this section.*
***All positions are not required and/or may not apply to a charter school.*

Revenue Assumptions

Directions: This sheet allows sponsors to provide the proposed authorizer with an overview of any assumed revenue streams. This sheet includes a pre-populated average per-student state and local fund revenue amount. The average per-student amount is based off the geographic LEA's most recently approved final expenditure report and is populated in this sheet based on the sponsor's chosen "Geographic District" on the "Proposed School Information" sheet.

Sponsors must enter the amount of cash on hand/in bank within the "Beginning Cash Balance" section. Additionally, sponsors must enter any revenue from other sources including, but not limited to, grants, fundraising, and philanthropy. Assumption notes should clearly explain details related to any revenue sources that the sponsor adds to this sheet. When listing revenues, sponsors do not need to include any projected federal passthrough revenues (e.g., Title I, Title II, etc.).

Average Per-Student State and Local Funds Revenue for the Selected Geographic LEA: ***$10,522.59***

Beginning Cash Balance	Year 0 2025-26
Cash on hand/in bank	

State & Local Revenues	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Average Per-Student State and Local Funds		$ 2,020,336.34	$ 3,030,504.51	$ 4,040,672.69	$ 5,050,840.86	$ 6,061,009.03

Grants / Fundraising / Philanthropy etc.	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Status of Funding	Assumption Notes
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 15,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	BES Start-up Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	CSP Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	Charter School Growth Fund
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$ 15,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Secured	2024-2025 Z Combinator Fellowship Gift
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 750,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	In-planning	Building Hope - a non-profit facility developer for cl
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	In-planning	TNDOE SRO Grant
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ 250,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	In-process	NewSchools Venture Fund
insert revenue source (remove this text if needed)	$ -	$1,093,809.80	$1,640,544.33	$2,183,345.95	$2,730,080.47	$3,228,814.99	In-process	Projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and fed
TOTAL	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 1,683,809.80	$ 2,215,544.33	$ 2,333,345.95	$ 2,880,080.47	$ 3,378,814.99		

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,704,146.14	$ 5,246,048.84	$ 6,374,018.64	$ 7,930,921.33	$ 9,439,824.02

Directions: This sheet allows sponsors to summarize planned expenses using the object codes and line items from Tennessee's standardized chart of accounts. Sponsors must enter all relevant expense amounts for the pre-opening year (year 0) through the fifth year of operation and include notes for any items requiring further explanation or that are unique to the school's model.

This template is not the actual budget but a summary to demonstrate readiness to operate a charter school. Sponsors should align their budget assumptions to specific object codes as outlined within the Tennessee Department of Education's Standardized System of Accounting and Reporting Guidance Document. When an item spans multiple functions, sponsors must list all applicable functions within the "Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes" column.

Access the Standardized System of Accounting and Reporting Guidance Document here: https://eplan.tn.gov/DocumentLibrary/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentKey=2061546&inline=true

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **1. Personal Services**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
EXAMPLE: 116 Teachers	***$ -***	***$ 251,566.00***	***$ 375,896.00***	***$ 450,356.00***	***$ 651,232.00***	***$ 750,155.00***	***71100, 71200, 71300, 73400***
104 Principal(s)	$ 85,000.00	$ 108,000.00	$ 110,160.00	$ 112,363.20	$ 114,610.46	$ 116,902.67	Code 72410 104: Assumes salary of $85k for Proposed Executive
105 Supervisor / Director	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
113 Internal Audit Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
116 Teachers	$ -	$ 772,497.00	$ 1,217,684.16	$ 1,642,591.86	$ 2,075,997.63	$ 2,518,071.57	Code 71100 116: Assumes base salary up to $57,222 for Teachers
118 Secretary to Board	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
119 Accountants/Bookkeepers	$ 11,250.00	$ 45,000.00	$ 45,900.00	$ 46,818.00	$ 47,754.36	$ 48,709.45	Code 72410 119: Assumes salary of $45k for Office Manager in Ye
120 Computer Programmer(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
121 Data Processing Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
122 Purchasing Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
123 Guidance Personnel	$ -	$ 62,424.00	$ 63,672.48	$ 127,369.93	$ 129,917.33	$ 132,515.68	Code 72130 123: Assumes base salary up to $62,424 for School C
124 Psychological Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
128 Homebound Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
129 Librarian(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
130 Social Workers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
131 Medical Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
132 Material Supervisor(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
135 Assessment Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
136 Audiovisual Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
137 Education Media Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
138 Instructional Computer Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
139 Assistant Principal(s)	$ 79,770.60	$ 237,211.20	$ 319,985.42	$ 404,415.13	$ 412,503.44	$ 420,753.50	Code 72410 139: Assumes base salary up to $81,151.20 with 2% a
142 Mechanic(s)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
146 Bus Drivers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
160 Guards	$	$	$	$	$	$	N/A
161 Secretary(s)	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,700.00	$ 36,414.00	$ 37,142.28	$ 37,885.13	Code 72410 161: Assumes base salary of $35k with 2% annual in
163 Educational Assistants	$ -	$ 421,362.00	$ 617,061.24	$ 816,674.49	$ 1,020,280.00	$ 1,227,957.59	Code 71100 163: Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% ann
164 Attendants	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
165 Cafeteria Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
166 Custodial Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
167 Maintenance Personnel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
169 Part-time Personnel	$ -	$ 10,440.00	$ 20,800.00	$ 30,400.00	$ 40,800.00	$ 48,800.00	
170 School Resource Officer	$ -	$ 75,000.00	$ 75,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	Code 72130 170: Assumes salary of $75k for School Resource Of
171 Speech Pathologist	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Contracted Services Provider (see below)
189 Other Salaries & Wages	$ -	$ 15,000.00	$ 55,500.00	$ 306,750.00	$ 375,750.00	$ 443,450.00	Code 71100 188: <up to $3,000> EOY Tennessee Comprehensive
195 Certified Substitute Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
196 In-Service Training	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
198 Non-certified Substitute Teachers	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
TOTAL	**$ 176,020.60**	**$ 1,781,934.20**	**$ 2,561,463.30**	**$ 3,673,796.61**	**$ 4,404,755.50**	**$ 5,145,045.59**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **2. Employee Benefits**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
201 Social Security	$ 10,913.28	$ 109,832.64	$ 157,521.13	$ 225,890.59	$ 270,565.24	$ 315,967.23	Code 71100 201: Assumes 6.20% of all wages for Social Security
204 Pensions	$ 2,376.28	$ 23,915.17	$ 34,298.94	$ 49,185.85	$ 62,598.90	$ 68,799.32	Code 71100 204: TCRS Legacy assumes 9% of all wages for 15% o
206 Life Insurance	$ 176.02	$ 1,771.49	$ 2,540.66	$ 3,643.40	$ 4,363.96	$ 5,096.25	Code 71100 206: Assumes 0.1% of all wages for Life Insurance.
207 Medical Insurance	$ 12,375.00	$ 170,500.00	$ 236,500.00	$ 313,500.00	$ 374,000.00	$ 429,000.00	Code 71100 207: Assumes $5500 per FTE for medical insurance (
208 Dental Insurance	$ 843.75	$ 11,625.00	$ 16,125.00	$ 21,375.00	$ 25,500.00	$ 29,250.00	Code 71100 208: Assumes $375 per FTE for dental and vision ins
210 Unemployment Compensation	$ 900.00	$ 12,600.00	$ 18,400.00	$ 24,000.00	$ 28,600.00	$ 32,600.00	Code 71100 210: Assumes $400 per FTE for unemployment com
211 Local Retirement	$ 7,920.93	$ 79,717.24	$ 114,329.85	$ 163,952.85	$ 196,378.00	$ 229,331.05	Code 71100 211: Empower Local Retirement assumes 9% of all v
212 Employer Medicare	$ 2,552.30	$ 25,686.67	$ 36,839.62	$ 52,829.25	$ 63,277.35	$ 73,895.56	Code 71100 212: Assumes 1.45% of all wages for Employer Medi
215 On-behalf Payments to OPEB	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	N/A
217 Retirement Hybrid Stabilization	$ 5,544.65	$ 55,802.07	$ 80,030.89	$ 114,766.99	$ 137,464.60	$ 160,531.74	Code 71100 217: TCRS Hybrid assumes 9% of all wages for 35% o
TOTAL	**$ 43,602.21**	**$ 491,450.28**	**$ 696,586.09**	**$ 969,143.93**	**$ 1,162,748.05**	**$ 1,344,471.15**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **3. Contracted Services**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
302 Advertising	$ 11,500.00	$ 21,260.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	$ 18,380.00	Code 72520 302: Assumes $5k in Year 0 for Student and Staff Rec
304 Architects	$ 10,000.00						Code 91300 304: Assumes $5k for 2 feasibility studies for propo
305 Audit Services	$ 2,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	Code 72310 305: Assumes $2k in Year 0 for 990 Services. Assume
307 Communication							
308 Consultants	$ 25,995.00	$ 25,995.00	$ 25,995.00	$ 10,995.00	$ 10,995.00	$ 10,995.00	Code 72210 308: Assumes $15k in Years 0-2 for BES Follow-on
309 Contracts With Government Agencies							
310 Contracts With Other Public Agencies							
311 Contracts With Other School Systems							
312 Contracts With Private Agencies							
313 Contracts With Parents							
314 Contracts With Public Carriers							
315 Contracts With Vehicle Owners							
317 Data Processing Services	$ 52,725.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	$ 18,585.00	Code 72110 317: Assumes $52,575 in Year 0 for PowerSchool SIS
320 Dues & Memberships	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Code 72510 320: Assumes $0 per month for currently-open Hori
321 Engineering Services							
322 Evaluation & Testing	$ -	$ 38,400.00	$ 57,600.00	$ 76,800.00	$ 96,000.00	$ 115,200.00	Code 72130 322: Assumes $200 per student for assessments and
328 Janitorial Services	$ 4,781.25	$ 19,125.00	$ 25,875.00	$ 36,000.00	$ 46,350.00	$ 51,750.00	Code 72610 328: Assumes $0.15 per square foot per month for C
329 Laundry Service							
330 Lease/SBITA Payments							
331 Legal Services	$ 3,750.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	$ 7,500.00	Code 72310 331: Assumes $3750 in Year 0 for potential legal fees
335 Maintenance & Repair Services Building	$ 7,968.75	$ 31,875.00	$ 43,125.00	$ 60,000.00	$ 77,250.00	$ 86,250.00	Code 72620 335: Assumes $3 per square foot for Maintenance &
336 Maintenance & Repair Services Equipment							
338 Maintenance & Repair Services Vehicles							
340 Medical and Dental Services	$ -	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 40,000.00	Code 72710 340: Assumes $4k per month from August to May in
342 Payments to Schools-Breakfast	$ -	$ 69,120.00	$ 103,680.00	$ 138,240.00	$ 172,800.00	$ 207,360.00	Code 73100 342: Assumes $2 per day (180 days) for breakfast per
343 Payments to Schools-Lunch	$ -	$ 120,960.00	$ 181,440.00	$ 241,920.00	$ 302,400.00	$ 362,880.00	Code 73100 343: Assumes $3.50 per day (180 days) for lunch per
344 Payments to Schools-Other							
345 Payments to Schools-Other USDA							
348 Postal Charges	$ -	$ 975.00	$ 1,440.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,880.00	Code 72110 348: Assumes $5 per scholar for postal charges with
350 Internet Connectivity	$ 9,894.00	$ 24,623.40	$ 26,108.40	$ 27,771.60	$ 29,078.40	$ 30,266.40	Code 72250 350: Assumes $300 in Year 0 for Technology Lab new
351 Rentals	$ 53,125.00	$ 212,500.00	$ 287,500.00	$ 400,000.00	$ 515,000.00	$ 575,000.00	Code 72610 351: Assumes $20 per square foot for Rent per year
354 Transportation Other Than Students							
355 Travel	$ -	$ 268,287.02	$ 372,931.33	$ 485,210.73	$ 605,575.00	$ 734,497.66	Code 72210 355: Assumes 2 regular education buses and 1 spe
356 Tuition							
359 Disposal Fees	$ 600.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	Code 72610 359: Assumes $200 per month for waste disposal (3
367 Maintenance & Repair Services Records							
369 Contracts for Substitute Teachers Certified	$ -	$ 12,000.00	$ 18,000.00	$ 24,000.00	$ 30,000.00	$ 36,000.00	Code 71100 369: Assumes $150 per day (10 days) for Certified Su
370 Contracts for Substitute Teachers Non-certified	$ -	$ 6,000.00	$ 9,000.00	$ 12,000.00	$ 15,000.00	$ 18,000.00	Code 71100 370: Assumes $75 per day (10 days) for Certified Sub
399 Other Contracted Services	$ 24,000.00	$ 85,000.00	$ 90,700.00	$ 126,550.00	$ 150,950.00	$ 196,350.00	Code 72510 399: Assumes $4k per month for Financial Managem
TOTAL	**$ 206,339.00**	**$ 1,021,605.42**	**$ 1,347,259.73**	**$ 1,745,272.33**	**$ 2,157,663.40**	**$ 2,531,294.06**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **4. Supplies and Materials**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
410 Custodial Supplies							
411 Data Processing Supplies							
412 Diesel Fuel							
413 Drugs & Medical Supplies	$ 200.00	$ 2,200.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,600.00	$ 1,200.00	$ 1,000.00	Code 72120 413: Assumes $200 per classroom and office space
415 Electricity	$ 10,625.00	$ 21,250.00	$ 28,750.00	$ 40,000.00	$ 51,500.00	$ 57,500.00	Code 72610 415: Assumes $2 per square foot per year for Utilitie
418 Equipment & Machinery Parts	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
422 Food Supplies							
423 Fuel Oil							
424 Garage Supplies							
425 Gasoline							
426 General Construction Materials							
429 Instructional Supplies & Materials	$ -	$ 86,800.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	$ 48,400.00	Code 71100 429: Assumes $400 per student for curricula resourc
430 Textbooks Electronic							
432 Library Books/Media	$ -	$ 3,840.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	$ 1,920.00	Code 72210 432: Assumes $20 per new student for classroom li
433 Lubricants							
434 Natural Gas							
435 Office Supplies	$ 1,000.00	$ 11,600.00	$ 14,200.00	$ 17,600.00	$ 34,200.00	$ 36,200.00	Code 72250 435: Assumes $800 in Years 1-2 for one copier lease
437 Periodicals							
448 T & I Construction Materials							
449 Textbooks Bound							
451 Uniforms	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	
453 Vehicle Parts							
454 Water & Sewer	$ 600.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	$ 2,400.00	Code 72610 454: Assumes $200 per month for water and sewer (
470 Cabling	$ 3,500.00						Code 72250 470: Assumes $3500 for average market rate for cabli
471 Software							
499 Other Supplies and Materials	$ 5,000.00	$ 111,140.00	$ 58,160.00	$ 62,080.00	$ 62,000.00	$ 62,920.00	Code 71100 499: Assumes $20 per student for printing paper (19
TOTAL	**$ 20,925.00**	**$ 239,230.00**	**$ 155,030.00**	**$ 174,000.00**	**$ 201,620.00**	**$ 210,340.00**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions **5. Other Charges**	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
501 Boiler Insurance							
502 Building & Content Insurance							
504 Indirect Cost							
505 Judgments							
506 Liability Insurance	$ 3,750.00	$ 17,500.00	$ 22,500.00	$ 27,500.00	$ 32,500.00	$ 37,500.00	Code 72310 506: Assumes $3750 for D and O liability insurance
508 Premium on Corporate Surety Bonds							
509 Refunds							
510 Trustee's Commission							
511 Vehicle and Equipment Insurance							
513 Workers Compensation							
524 In-Service / Staff Development	$ 2,500.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	Code 72210 524: Assumes $2500 in Year 0 and $5k in Years 1-5 an
533 Criminal Investigation of Applicants TBI							
534 Refund to Applicant for Criminal Investigation							
535 Fee Waivers							
590 Transfers Out							
595 TISA On-behalf Payments							
599 Other Charges	$ 125.00	$ 5,600.00	$ 8,325.00	$ 11,175.00	$ 13,875.00	$ 16,525.00	Code 71400 599: Assumes $25 per FTE for gifts and awards in Ye
TOTAL	**$ 6,375.00**	**$ 28,100.00**	**$ 35,825.00**	**$ 43,675.00**	**$ 51,375.00**	**$ 59,025.00**	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
6. Debt Service							
601 Principal on Bonds							
602 Principal on Notes							
603 Interest on Bonds							
604 Interest on Notes							
610 Principal on Leases							
611 Interest on Leases							
612 Principal on Other Loans Payable							
613 Interest on Other Loans Payable							
620 Debt Service Contribution to Primary Government							
699 Other Debt Service	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	Code 82330 699: Assumes $35k for authorizer fee in Years 1-5.
TOTAL	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	

Object Codes/Line Item Descriptions	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31	Applicable Function Codes/Assumption Notes
7. Capital Outlay							
701 Administration Equipment							
704 Attendance Equipment							
707 Building Improvements	$ 850,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	Code 76100 707: Assumes $850,000 for Building Improvements i
709 Data Processing Equipment							
710 Food Service Equipment							
711 Furniture & Fixtures	$ 7,500.00	$ 99,600.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 54,500.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 47,000.00	Code 91300 711: Assumes $500 per FTE (5.0) for staff furniture in
715 Land							
717 Maintenance Equipment							
720 Plant Operation Equipment							
722 Regular Instruction Equipment							
724 Site Development							
725 Special Education Equipment							
729 Transportation Equipment							
735 Health Equipment							
790 Other Equipment							
799 Other Capital Outlay							
TOTAL	$ 857,500.00	$ 99,600.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 54,500.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 47,000.00	

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
TOTAL EXPENSES	$1,310,761.81	$ 3,696,919.90	$ 4,880,664.12	$ 6,695,387.87	$ 8,062,661.95	$ 9,372,175.80

Summary

Note: Figures in this sheet are auto-calculated based on information provided within this template.

Starting Fund Balance

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Totals	**$ -**	**$ 204,238.19**	**$ 211,464.43**	**$ 576,849.16**	**$ 255,479.92**	**$ 123,739.30**

Revenues

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
State Revenues		$ 2,020,336.34	$ 3,030,504.51	$ 4,040,672.69	$ 5,050,840.86	$ 6,061,009.03
Grants / Fundraising / Philanthropy	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 1,683,809.80	$ 2,215,544.33	$ 2,333,345.95	$ 2,880,080.47	$ 3,378,814.99
Total Revenues	$ 1,515,000.00	$ 3,704,146.14	$ 5,246,048.84	$ 6,374,018.64	$ 7,930,921.33	$ 9,439,824.02

Expenditures

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Personal Services	$ 176,020.60	$ 1,781,934.20	$ 2,561,463.30	$ 3,673,796.61	$ 4,404,755.50	$ 5,145,045.59
Employee Benefits	$ 43,602.21	$ 491,450.28	$ 696,586.09	$ 969,143.93	$ 1,162,748.05	$ 1,344,471.15
Contracted Services	$ 206,339.00	$ 1,021,605.42	$ 1,347,259.73	$ 1,745,272.33	$ 2,157,663.40	$ 2,531,294.06
Supplies and Materials	$ 20,925.00	$ 239,230.00	$ 155,030.00	$ 174,000.00	$ 201,620.00	$ 210,340.00
Other Charges	$ 6,375.00	$ 28,100.00	$ 35,825.00	$ 43,675.00	$ 51,375.00	$ 59,025.00
Debt Service	$ -	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00	$ 35,000.00
Capital Outlay	$ 857,500.00	$ 99,600.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 54,500.00	$ 49,500.00	$ 47,000.00
Total Expenses	**$ 1,310,761.81**	**$ 3,696,919.90**	**$ 4,880,664.12**	**$ 6,695,387.87**	**$ 8,062,661.95**	**$ 9,372,175.80**

Summary

	Year 0 2025-26	Year 1 2026-27	Year 2 2027-28	Year 3 2028-29	Year 4 2029-30	Year 5 2030-31
Starting Fund Balance	**$ -**	**$ 204,238.19**	**$ 211,464.43**	**$ 576,849.16**	**$ 255,479.92**	**$ 123,739.30**
Total Revenue	**$ 1,515,000.00**	**$ 3,704,146.14**	**$ 5,246,048.84**	**$ 6,374,018.64**	**$ 7,930,921.33**	**$ 9,439,824.02**
Total Available Funds (Starting Fund Balance + Total Revenue)	**$ 1,515,000.00**	**$ 3,908,384.33**	**$ 5,457,513.28**	**$ 6,950,867.79**	**$ 8,186,401.25**	**$ 9,563,563.32**
Total Expenses	**$ 1,310,761.81**	**$ 3,696,919.90**	**$ 4,880,664.12**	**$ 6,695,387.87**	**$ 8,062,661.95**	**$ 9,372,175.80**
Ending Fund Balance	**$ 204,238.19**	**$ 211,464.43**	**$ 576,849.16**	**$ 255,479.92**	**$ 123,739.30**	**$ 191,387.52**

Operating Budget Narrative

REQUIRED FOR ALL SPONSORS

Section 3.2a: Explain how the operating budget is adequate to support full implementation of the school model and academic plan. Within the explanation, detail the minimum number of students that the school must enroll to sustainably operate and articulate the impact that the minimum enrollment would have on the budget.

To support our long-term sustainability and mitigate potential enrollment risks, Novus SMART Academy (K–8) has developed a strategy that aligns with both our mission and the realities of a competitive school choice landscape. One component of this strategy is our partnerships with Meredith McGann, Director of Policy & Outreach at Tennesseans for Student Success, and GrowthFuel Marketing through which we have significantly enhanced our community engagement efforts. With their support, we launched a targeted email marketing campaign informed by a data set of 599 families, each with a child between the ages of 4 and 7, residing in the 37167 or 37086 zip codes. These families also carry high likelihood scores (80–100) for both School Switch and School Choice, identifying them as strong prospective matches for our school model. While this data cannot be formally submitted with our application, a printed copy has been provided to Dr. Jeff McCann, Coordinator of Choice and Charter Schools at Rutherford County Schools, for review alongside the amended application.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s operating budget fully supports the school's educational model and academic plan by strategically allocating resources to ensure exceptional learning outcomes while maintaining financial sustainability. The budget aligns with our mission to provide scholars with an extraordinary learning experience, where college and career exploration begin in Kindergarten.

We also recognize concerns about enrollment risks and potential market saturation, given the presence of two public charter schools currently operating in our targeted community, as well as the possibility of a fourth charter school entering the same area with Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in August 2026. Accordingly, our financial model is intentionally conservative and built to withstand enrollment fluctuations. It ensures fiscal sustainability even if enrollment falls 25% below our Year 1 target of 192 scholars, equating to 144 enrolled scholars (see Figure 65). While a 35% shortfall would present a more significant challenge, our model includes cost-containment measures and aggressive fundraising strategies to maintain operational viability without compromising educational quality (see Figure 66).

Our model also includes key differentiators that make Novus SMART Academy more accessible and attractive to families, particularly our inclusion of transportation services, an offering not currently provided by other charter schools authorized by Rutherford County Schools. This commitment helps remove a major barrier for families and strengthens our value proposition within the broader school choice ecosystem.

Through structured collaboration with Dr. McCann, Coordinator of Choice and Charter Schools at Rutherford County Schools, we are open to engaging in strategic conversations around purposeful school siting. These discussions would be guided by data on projected population growth across Rutherford County and aim to ensure thoughtful placement of our school campus. Rather than contributing to charter oversaturation in the cities of La Vergne and Smyrna, this collaborative siting strategy would focus on emerging communities where demand for educational options remains unmet. This intentional planning approach enables us to meet families where they are, respond to evolving demographic trends, and support Rutherford County Schools' broader goals for educational access and quality, while complementing, rather than competing with, existing school choice offerings.

While annual enrollment numbers are critical due to their direct influence on public funding through the TISA base rate, weighted funding, and other federal, state, and local sources, our budget is designed to absorb minor fluctuations. As illustrated in Figure 65, we have identified clear minimum enrollment thresholds for sustainable operation and included contingency plans to address any potential revenue shifts.

Figure 65 - Targeted and Minimal Enrollment for Sustainable Operation

School Year	Grade Levels	Targeted Enrollment at 100%	Enrollment 25% Below (operational)	Enrollment 35% Below (critical condition)
Year 1	K-1	192 (8 staffed classrooms)	144 (6 staffed classrooms)	125 (6 staffed classrooms)
Year 2	K-2	288 (12 staffed classrooms)	216 (9 staffed classrooms)	183 (8 staffed classrooms)
Year 3	K-3	384 (16 staffed classrooms)	288 (12 staffed classrooms)	250 (11 staffed classrooms)
Year 4	K-4	480 (20 staffed classrooms)	360 (15 staffed classrooms)	312 (13 staffed classrooms)

Year 5	K-5	576 (24 staffed classrooms)	432 (18 staffed classrooms)	375 (16 staffed classrooms)

Enrolling 96 scholars in each grade level with 24 scholars in each classroom will enable us to achieve our desired two-educator classroom model with a ratio of 1 educator to 12 scholars. This ensures scholars receive personalized support during whole-class instruction, small group learning, and blended learning. The proposed budget has been carefully designed to maintain this ratio while expanding grade levels, ensuring the same high level of support for all scholars. Our budget prioritizes the resources needed to fulfill our SMART-integrated academic model, which incorporates College and Career Exploration, Character Education, and Structured English Immersion for English language learners through Asset-Based Learning (ABL), Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL), and Project-Based Learning (PBL) across all content as follows:

- **Staffing**: Allocating funds for a strategic two-educator model, enabling personalized instruction, targeted interventions, and rigorous curricula delivery.
- **Curricula and Resources**: Providing high-quality, standards-aligned curricula in Science, Math, Arts, Research and Technology to develop critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.
- **Professional Development**: Investing in training for educators and school leaders to implement research-based instructional strategies effectively.
- **Facilities and Operations**: Ensuring safe, supportive learning environments that foster academic excellence and character development.

Year 0 will focus on pre-operational investments to prepare for a successful launch in August 2026, including facilities preparation, staff recruitment, and professional learning and development. In Year 1, we will serve 192 scholars with the necessary staffing, instructional resources, and professional development to ensure a strong foundation for scholars, families, and staff. As enrollment grows to 576 scholars and families by Year 5 in grades K-5, our budget ensures scalability while maintaining high-quality academic instruction and support services. The gradual increase in enrollment allows for proportional scaling of expenses, ensuring that each scholar benefits from robust academic programming and character development initiatives. This careful alignment of resources with enrollment ensures that Novus SMART Academy (K-8) remains true to its mission of producing global achievers and closing the achievement gap, while meeting the requirements of T.C.A. § 49-13-104 to improve learning outcomes across all content.

Negative Impacts. While the proposed plan provides a solid foundation for Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s operations, several potential negative impacts may arise. Proactively identifying these risks allows us to develop contingency plans to mitigate their effects. With the following measures in place, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will navigate potential challenges while maintaining its commitment to providing an extraordinary learning experience for scholars and families (see Figure 66):

Figure 66 - Negative Impacts and Plans to Mitigate

Negative Impacts	Plans to Mitigate
Lower-Than-Projected Enrollment. *A shortfall in enrollment would directly reduce funding, leading to potential budget deficits. Consequently, fixed costs like salaries, facilities, and operations, might become unsustainable if enrollment targets aren't met.*	• **Early Recruitment Efforts**: Launch aggressive marketing and outreach campaigns to build a strong applicant pipeline before Year 1. • **Contingency Budget**: Develop a flexible budget with conservative revenue assumptions and a contingency reserve for shortfalls. • **Scalable Hiring**: Hire staff in phases, scaling based on confirmed enrollment rather than projections.
Higher Initial Operational Costs. Pre-operational costs for facilities preparation, recruitment, and training may exceed projections, which could strain cash flow and reduce funds available for Year 1 operations.	• **Detailed Cost Analysis**: Conduct thorough pre-operational planning to ensure cost estimates are accurate. • **Grants and Fundraising**: Pursue additional startup grants or philanthropic funding to offset Year 0 expenses. • **Prioritized Spending**: Delay non-essential purchases until after initial enrollment is confirmed (i.e., non-critical furniture, advanced technology beyond operational needs, non-essential classroom supplies, specialty equipment not required for core programming).
Difficulty Retaining High-Quality Staff. High turnover rates among educators and leaders could disrupt academic continuity and increase recruitment costs. This could lead to staff dissatisfaction with workload, and/or compensation could impact staff morale and scholar achievement outcomes.	• **Competitive Salaries**: Benchmark compensation against similar schools to remain competitive. • **Strong Onboarding and Development**: Invest in professional development and mentorship programs to support staff growth. • **Retention Bonuses**: As a result of securing additional philanthropic funding, we can offer financial incentives

	for multi-year commitments from key staff as we develop over time.
Insufficient Funding for Key Programs. Limited funding in the early years could compromise the implementation of our two-educator classroom model and/or other academic priorities.	• **Phase-In Programs**: Focus on core priorities in Year 1 and gradually introduce other initiatives. • **Leverage Partnerships**: Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses, and educational nonprofits to supplement resources. • **Grant Writing**: Actively pursue grants and in-kind donations for technology, curriculum development, and professional learning.
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Challenges. Lack of consistent community support could hinder enrollment and retention. Families may feel disconnected from the school, impacting scholar engagement and satisfaction.	• **Dedicated Engagement Team**: Assign team members to focus solely on building relationships with families and community stakeholders. • **Ongoing Communication**: Use newsletters, events, and social media to maintain regular communication with families. • **Feedback Mechanisms**: Implement surveys and focus groups to gather input and address concerns proactively.
Delayed Facility Readiness or Costs Overruns. Delays in securing or preparing facilities could disrupt the opening timeline. Unanticipated expenses for renovations or compliance could strain the budget.	• **Early Start**: Begin facility preparations well in advance of the opening date to allow for unforeseen delays. • **Professional Expertise**: Engage experienced project managers and real estate consultants to oversee the process. • **Flexible Space Options**: Secure backup options to ensure operations are not disrupted.
Over-Reliance on Public Funding. Fluctuations in local, state or federal funding levels could impact long-term sustainability. Dependence on enrollment-driven revenue may leave little room for error.	• **Diversify Revenue Streams**: Develop a robust fundraising strategy, including private donations and sponsorships. • **Advocacy Efforts**: Engage with policymakers to advocate for stable and adequate start up and facilities funding. • **Efficient Operations**: Regularly review expenditures to identify opportunities for cost savings.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed strategic mitigation plans to navigate various financial scenarios. Given the risks inherent in launching a new school, we have proactively explored multiple Year 1 enrollment scenarios to ensure financial viability, even in the event of lower-than-projected enrollment. Our budget has been designed conservatively to support the school's core academic and programmatic elements, allowing us to operate effectively at 75% of target enrollment. However, falling below projected enrollment would result in thin financial margins. To safeguard the school's financial health while maintaining the integrity of its educational mission, we have identified specific cost reductions that can be implemented if needed.

One of the primary adjustments involves modifying our enrollment plan. Instead of enrolling 96 scholars per grade level, with four classrooms of 24 scholars each, we would enroll 72 scholars per grade level, maintaining the class size of 24 students but reducing the total number of classrooms to three classrooms. This adjustment allows for a controlled reduction in staffing while preserving the student experience. Consequently, the most significant cost savings would come from personnel reductions, totaling $258,600. This includes eliminating two Licensed Teacher positions and two Teacher-in-Residence roles, ensuring that staffing levels align with enrollment while maintaining instructional quality.

Additional reductions would be made in contracted services, with a $12,844 decrease by scaling back expenditures on student and staff gifts and awards, uniform vouchers, evaluation and testing, and payments related to the school's breakfast and lunch programs. Further cost adjustments would come from supplies and materials, with $49,920 in savings achieved through reductions in student and faculty laptops, office supplies, instructional materials, and library books and media. Additionally, capital expenditures would be adjusted to reflect lower enrollment numbers, reducing student furniture purchases by $16,400.

In total, these adjustments represent a base budget reduction of $337,764. By implementing these measures, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) ensures financial sustainability while preserving the essential components of its educational model. These proactive planning efforts reflect our commitment to maintaining a high-quality academic experience, regardless of enrollment fluctuations, and demonstrate our dedication to responsible fiscal management in the critical first year of operation.

Section 3.2b: Outline all revenue assumptions and explain specifically how these assumptions were determined. If the operating budget includes grants, fundraising, or philanthropic revenue, provide a detailed explanation for how the revenue amounts were determined, and whether the funds have been awarded or are estimates. If the funds have not been awarded, the narrative should disclose where they are in the process, the timing of when these funds will be awarded, and a contingency plan should the funds not be realized.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s financial plan is built on a diversified revenue strategy, relying on enrollment-driven public funding, grants, philanthropic contributions, and private donations. Each revenue source is carefully analyzed to ensure sustainability, with contingency plans in place to address potential shortfalls.

As part of the public charter school application process last year, our operating budget was submitted using projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues. However, recent guidance from the Tennessee Department of Education modified the expectations during this year's charter application process. On January 15th, our Finance Committee reached out to Christie Williams, Manager of Charter Schools at the Tennessee Department of Education, to clarify how the updated directions- removing federal passthrough revenues from the budget template- impacts the accuracy and representation of our financial model. The Finance Committee posed a critical question: How can sponsors present a budget that accurately reflects their financial model without including essential projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, such as Title programs, E-Rate, Special Education Funding, and NSLP reimbursements? These revenue streams are vital to our funding projections and directly influence the feasibility of our operational plan. In response, Christie Williams explained:

> "We removed all passthrough revenue to simplify application process and operating budget template for sponsors. The excel template that the sponsor uses to apply to start a charter school is not a budgeting tool or artifact/document that an authorizer should use as the charter's final budget. Our goal was to remove any guesswork from the operating budget template and application process so sponsors could accurately present facts within their application and not rely on assumptions. Sponsors should articulate their "financial model and the true scope of our funding needs" in the budget narrative portion of the application rather than in the Operating Budget Template."

Our Finance Committee also raised concerns regarding the alignment of funding categorizations with best practices, particularly the challenges of including funding classified as "in-process" or "in-planning" when not all authorizers account for these in evaluations. To address this, the Finance Committee asked how excluding these funding sources supports sponsors in achieving success during the authorization process. Christie Williams clarified:

> "Requirement "b" within section 3.1 and requirement "d" within section 3.2 of the charter creation application requirements document requires sponsors to include all anticipated funding sources which can include both secured and anticipated grants. It is important for sponsors to note which grants are secured and provide evidence that anticipated grants will be awarded."

Christie Williams further advised that the operating budget template and narrative work together to highlight the complexities of our financial model. Sponsors may include anticipated grants within the template, supported by detailed explanations in the narrative. For example, she recommended adding the SRO grant to the revenues sheet in the operating budget template and specifying how contracted services will be funded in the narrative. This exchange underscores the importance of accurately representing the financial model while adhering to application guidelines. With that said, the following chart details our critical projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, which remain a cornerstone of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s funding strategy (See Figure 67).

Figure 67 - Estimated Funding Sources and Methodology

Estimated Funding Sources	Year 1 192 scholars	Year 2 288 scholars	Year 3 384 scholars	Year 4 480 scholars	Year 5 576 scholars
TISA Base	$2,020,336.34	$3,030.504.51	$4,040,672,69	$5,050,840.86	$6,061,009.03
TISA Weight Economically Disadvantaged	$355,137.41	$531,390.80	$707,644.18	$883,897.56	$1,060,150.94
TISA Weight Students with Disabilities	$75,762.65	$113,643.97	$151,525.30	$189,406.62	$227,287.94
TISA Weight English Language Learners	$246,754.74	$371,973.56	$493,509.47	$618,728.29	$743,947.11
TISA Direct Grades K-3 Literacy Support	$96,000	$144,000	$192,000	$192,000	$192,000

TISA Direct Grade 4 Tutoring	N/A	N/A	N/A	$48,000	$48,000
Title I	$67,500	$101,000	$134,500	$168,000	$201,500
Title II	$9,600	$14,400	$19,200	$24,000	$28,800
Title III English Language Learners	$16,750	$25,250	$33,500	$42,000	$50,500
E-Rate	$20,655	$30,906	$41,157	$51,408	$61,659
Special Education Funding	$72,000	$108,000	$144,000	$180,000	$216,000
NSLP Reimbursement	$133,650	$199,980	$266,310	$332,640	$398,970
Grand Total	$1,093,809.80	$1,640,544.33	$2,183,345.95	$2,730,080.47	$3,228,814.99

Methodology

The TISA Base allocates $10,522.59 per scholar enrolled.

The TISA Weight allocations are calculated based on the total number of scholars who are categorized as Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners. The population percentages are based on the average demographics of schools located in Laverne and Smyrna. Calculations are as follows:

- TISA Base x 25% (Economically Disadvantaged) x # of scholars identified (70%) per school year.
  - Year 1: 135 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 25% x 135 students = $355,137.41)
  - Year 2: 202 scholars = $531,390.80
  - Year 3: 269 scholars = $707,644.18
  - Year 4: 336 scholars = $883.897.56
  - Year 5: 403 scholars = $1,060,150.94
- TISA Base x 15% (Students with Disabilities) x # of scholars identified (25%) per school year.
  - Year 1: 48 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 15% x 48 students = $75,762.65)
  - Year 2: 72 scholars = $113,643.97
  - Year 3: 96 scholars = $151,525.30
  - Year 4: 120 scholars = $189,406.62
  - Year 5: 144 scholars = $227,287.94
- TISA Base x 20% (English Language Learners) x # of scholars identified (35%) per school year.
  - Year 1: 67 scholars (ex. $10,522.59 x 35% x 67 students = $246,754.74)
  - Year 2: 101 scholars = $371,973.56
  - Year 3: 134 scholars = $493,509.47
  - Year 4: 168 scholars = $618,728.29
  - Year 5: 202 scholars = $743,947.11

TISA Direct

- $500 per scholar for Literacy support in Grades Kindergarten through Grade 3 per school each year enrolled.
  - Year 1: 192 scholars ($500 x 192 scholars = $96,000)
  - Year 2: 288 scholars = $144,000
  - Year 3: 384 scholars = $192,000
  - Year 4: 384 scholars = $192,000
  - Year 5: 384 scholars = $192,000
- $500 per scholar for tutoring support in Grade 4 per school each year enrolled.
  - Year 1: N/A
  - Year 2: N/A
  - Year 3: N/A
  - Year 4 (Grade 4 only): 96 scholars = $48,000
  - Year 5 (Grade 4 only): 96 scholars = $48,000

	• Title I Funding is $500 per scholar each year and categorized as Economically Disadvantaged as follows:
	  ○ Year 1: 135 scholars ($500 x 135 scholars = $67,500)
	  ○ Year 2: 202 scholars = $101,000
	  ○ Year 3: 269 scholars = $134,500
	  ○ Year 4: 336 scholars = $168,000
	  ○ Year 5: 403 scholars = $201,500
	• Title II Funding is $50 per scholar each year enrolled.
	  ○ Year 1: 192 scholars ($50 x 192 scholars = $9,600)
	  ○ Year 2: 288 scholars = $14,400
	  ○ Year 3: 384 scholars = $19,200
	  ○ Year 4: 480 scholars = $24,000
	  ○ Year 5: 576 scholars = $28,800
	• Title III Funding is $250 per scholar each year enrolled and categorized as an English Language Learner as follows:
	  ○ Year 1: 67 scholars ($250 x 67 scholars = $16,750)
	  ○ Year 2: 101 scholars = $25,250
	  ○ Year 3: 134 scholars = $33,500
	  ○ Year 4: 168 scholars = $42,000
	  ○ Year 5: 202 scholars = $50,500
	• E-Rate Funding is 40% for Category 1 (Internet Access & Data Transmission) and 35% for Category 2 (Internal Connections & Network Equipment) based on 70% NSLP eligibility through the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).
	• Special Education Funding is $1500 per scholar each year enrolled and categorized as a Student with Disabilities as follows:
	  ○ Year 1: 48 scholars ($1500 x 48 scholars = $72,000)
	  ○ Year 2: 72 scholars = $108,000
	  ○ Year 3: 96 scholars = $144,000
	  ○ Year 4: 120 scholars = $180,000
	  ○ Year 5: 144 scholars = $216,000
	• Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring that 100% of our students receive free breakfast and lunch daily. While we will receive National School Lunch Program (NSLP) reimbursement for approximately 70% of our student population—at a rate of $5.50 per day per eligible scholar ($2.00 for breakfast and $3.50 for lunch)—we are dedicated to covering the remaining costs to guarantee that every student has access to nutritious meals, regardless of economic status.
	  ○ Year 1: 135 scholars ($5.50 x 180 days x 135 scholars = $133,650)
	  ○ Year 2: 202 scholars = $199.980
	  ○ Year 3: 269 scholars = $266,310
	  ○ Year 4: 336 scholars = $332,640
	  ○ Year 5: 403 scholars = $398,970

Contingency Plan	• Should we have lower-than-expected revenues through TISA Weight and/or Direct funding and/or federal passthrough funding, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize essential expenditures, such as staffing and instructional materials, and identify potential cuts and savings. • We will also consider a short-term loan or line of credit as a contingency for cash flow management during startup years. • To mitigate risk of overestimating TISA Weight and/or Direct funding and/or federal passthrough funding, particularly in year 1 as a new school, we will revise our budget with updated projections for per pupil funding and student counts during the spring of 2026 to ensure a proactive plan to operate conservatively within available funding boundaries.

While Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has established contingency plans to address potential funding shortfalls, the inclusion of projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues provides a more accurate and comprehensive perspective on our operating budget for Years 0 through 5. These revenues are essential to reflecting the full scope of our financial model and projected operations. Without these funding streams, our operating budget underrepresents the true fiscal capacity required to deliver our high-quality educational program to adequately support our students, particularly those from underserved communities or within our special education program. Including these revenues in our projections demonstrates a more realistic portrayal of our financial health, revealing sustainable ending fund balances in each year of operation. These balances serve as critical indicators of Novus SMART Academy (K-8)'s ability to maintain operational stability, meet unforeseen expenses, and invest strategically in long-term goals. Our projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues not only validate the viability of our financial plan but also highlight our commitment to fiscal responsibility and programmatic excellence. Aside from critical projected TISA Weight, TISA Direct, and federal passthrough revenues, we are thrilled to share that we have secured and applied for several grant opportunities as follows (Figure 68):

Figure 68 - Secured and Applied For Grants

Organization and/or Grant Name	Amount Available	Funding Status & Assumptions
BES Startup Grant	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 0. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
Building Hope	$250,000	Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Charter School Growth Fund	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
CSF Grant	$500,000	TNDOE Charter Schools Facilities (CSF) Grant with a maximum reward of $500,000 based on the number of applications, specific needs identified by project, total funds available, and competitive score. Can apply post-authorization.
CSP Startup Grant	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
NewSchools Venture Fund	$250,000	Applied and will receive first notification of application status in March 2025.
Z Combinator	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 1. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
School Resource Officer Grant	$75,000	The Statewide School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Grant provides funding to local law enforcement entities to place one full-time, POST-certified SRO in each K-12 public school and public charter school in Tennessee. Local law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply for funding not to exceed $75,000 per year, per SRO, per school for which they are responsible for providing SRO services. SROs provide the crucial link between schools and law enforcement agencies in their continued efforts to establish and maintain safe and secure learning environments. An SRO acts as a liaison between the police, the school, and the community. As part of their day-to-day operations, SROs are responsible for responding to all criminal acts committed at the school. Most of an SRO's time is spent interacting with youth. An SRO should connect with students, develop beneficial and enriching relationships, and have a positive effect on the school's overall climate. The duties of SROs include monitoring those who visit schools, providing assistance for disruptive students, and enforcing applicable laws. Can apply post-authorization.
Contingency Plan	• Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has secured $515,000 in startup funding for Year 0 and is pursuing an additional $1,000,000 in startup funding. As shown in the budget, Year 0 has an ending fund balance of over $200,000. However, if we are not able to secure all the grants, we will cut or defer planned expenditures tied to these funds that will not impact our academic program. These cuts may include, but are not limited to, personnel services and employee benefits, contracted services, supplies and materials, and capital outlay expenditures that do not violate compliance with county and/or municipal building code requirements. • To fill the gap in funding, our Development Committee will pursue additional grant opportunities and cultivate donor relationships. • We will incorporate a conservative estimate of funds raised (e.g., assume 75% of projected totals) and build partnerships with local businesses to supplement donations through in-kind contributions if monetary goals are not met. • We will also identify alternative vendors who can provide the needed goods or services, or use public funding, such as government grants or other financial resources, to fill gaps if in-kind contributions are delayed or unavailable.	

Section 3.2c: If applicable, list all donations of private funding, including, but not limited to, gifts received from foreign governments, foreign legal entities and, when reasonably known, domestic entities affiliated with either foreign governments or foreign legal entities.

Not Applicable

Section 3.2d: Specify the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Please note which are already secured and which are anticipated. Include evidence of firm commitments where applicable.

Figure 69 - Secured and Applied For Grants

Organization and/or Grant Name	Amount Available	Funding Status & Assumptions
BES Startup Grant	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 0. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
Building Hope	$250,000	Building Hope, a non-profit facility developer for charter schools nationwide, is also authorized to invest up to $250,000 toward facility identification, security deposits, due diligence, and program test fits once a charter school is approved. See **Attachment D** for Letter of Support.
Charter School Growth Fund	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
CSF Grant	$500,000	TNDOE Charter Schools Facilities (CSF) Grant with a maximum reward of $500,000 based on the number of applications, specific needs identified by project, total funds available, and competitive score. Can apply post-authorization.
CSP Startup Grant	$750,000	Secured funding for Years 0-2. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
NewSchools Venture Fund	$250,000	Applied and will receive first notification of application status in March 2025.
Z Combinator	$15,000	Secured funding for Year 1. See **Attachment D** for confirmation of funding.
School Resource Officer Grant	$75,000	The Statewide School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Grant provides funding to local law enforcement entities to place one full-time, POST-certified SRO in each K-12 public school and public charter school in Tennessee. Local law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply for funding not to exceed $75,000 per year, per SRO, per school for which they are responsible for providing SRO services. SROs provide the crucial link between schools and law enforcement agencies in their continued efforts to establish and maintain safe and secure learning environments. An SRO acts as a liaison between the police, the school, and the community. As part of their day-to-day operations, SROs are responsible for responding to all criminal acts committed at the school. Most of an SRO's time is spent interacting with youth. An SRO should connect with students, develop beneficial and enriching relationships, and have a positive effect on the school's overall climate. The duties of SROs include monitoring those who visit schools, providing assistance for disruptive students, and enforcing applicable laws. Can apply post-authorization.
Contingency Plan	• Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has secured $515,000 in startup funding for Year 0 and is pursuing an additional $1,000,000 in startup funding. As shown in the budget, Year 0 has an ending fund balance of over $200,000. However, if we are not able to secure all the grants, we will cut or defer planned expenditures tied to these funds that will not impact our academic program. These cuts may include, but are not limited to, personnel services and employee benefits, contracted services, supplies and materials, and capital outlay expenditures that do not violate compliance with county and/or municipal building code requirements. • To fill the gap in funding, our Development Committee will pursue additional grant opportunities and cultivate donor relationships. • We will incorporate a conservative estimate of funds raised (e.g., assume 75% of projected totals) and build partnerships with local businesses to supplement donations through in-kind contributions if monetary goals are not met. • We will also identify alternative vendors who can provide the needed goods or services, or use public funding, such as government grants or other financial resources, to fill gaps if in-kind contributions are delayed or unavailable.	

Section 3.2e: Provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the anticipated expenditures included in Section 3.1 of this application.

To determine the anticipated expenditures for Novus SMART Academy (K-8), we employed a conservative budgeting approach beginning in Year 0. This method ensured that all 53 expenditures listed below were carefully justified based on projected needs to align with our school model and design (Figure 70). Our process was structured into four key phases: identifying expense categories, collecting data and making assumptions, calculating costs, and validating the budget through rigorous review.

First, we identified the primary expenditure categories essential to successfully open and operate in Year 1 and beyond. These categories included personnel services, employee benefits, contracted services supplies and materials, other charges (i.e., liability insurance, professional development, and gifts and awards for students, teachers, and staff), debt service, and capital outlay. Once we established these categories, we gathered data to ensure that our projections were grounded in realistic market conditions. Salaries were benchmarked against compensation data from local school districts and charter networks to remain competitive in attracting high-quality educators and staff. Facility costs were estimated through comprehensive market research of commercial lease rates within our target area. Instructional material costs were projected using per-student expenditure estimates aligned with both state and national guidelines. With these data points in place, we moved on to cost calculations. Each expenditure category was estimated using a combination of vendor quotes, historical data from comparable charter schools, and established best-practice benchmarks.

Finally, the anticipated expenditures underwent a thorough validation and review process. The finance team meticulously examined each estimate, comparing them against industry standards and best practices. Furthermore, the Board of Directors, particularly Daniel Kadeba with expertise in finance, provided oversight and constructive feedback to refine and optimize our budget. This multi-layered approach ensured that the financial projections in Section 3.1 of this application were both precise and aligned with the long-term sustainability of Novus SMART Academy (K-8).

Figure 70 - Expenditures

Personnel Services (10 expenditures)	
Teacher in Residence	Code 71100 163 • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 1 (9.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 2 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 9.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 3 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 9.0 FTE on STEP 4). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 4 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 4.0 FTE on STEP 4; 9.0 FTE on STEP 5). • Assumes base salary up to $46,818 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Residence in Year 5 (4.0 FTE on STEP 2; 4.0 FTE on STEP 3; 4.0 FTE on STEP 4; 4.0 FTE on STEP 5; 9.0 FTE on STEP 6).
Licensed Teacher	Code 71100 116 • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 for Teachers in Year 1 (13.0 FTE up to STEP 2). Gifted Teacher will be 0.5 PTE in Year 1. • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 2 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 14.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 3 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 14.0 FTE on STEP 4). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual increase for Teachers in Year 4 (7.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 7.0 FTE on STEP 4; 14.0 FTE on STEP 5). • Assumes base salary up to $57,222 with 2% annual for Teachers in Year 5 (6.0 FTE on STEP 2; 7.0 FTE on STEP 3; 7.0 FTE on STEP 4; 7.0 FTE on STEP 5; 14.0 FTE on STEP 6).
Licensed School Counselor	Code 72130 123 • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 for School Counselor in Year 1 (1.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 2 (1.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 3 (1.0 FTE on STEP 4; 1.0 FTE on STEP 2). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 4 (1.0 FTE on STEP 5; 1.0 FTE on STEP 3). • Assumes base salary up to $62,424 with 2% annual increase for School Counselor in Year 5 (1.0 FTE on STEP 6; 1.0 FTE on STEP 4).

Assistant Principals	Code 72410 139 • Assumes base salary up to $81,151.20 with 2% annual increase for AP of Operations and Finance in Years 0-1 (0.50 FTE status in Year 0 from January to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 for AP of Scholar Access in Years 0-1 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 for AP of School Culture and Community Engagement in Years 0-5 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 2; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 2; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 with 2% annual increase for K-2 Assistant Principal in Years 2-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 2-5). • Assumes base salary up to $78,030 with 2% annual increase for 3-5 Assistant Principal in Years 3-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 3-5).
Proposed Executive Director & School Principal	Code 72410 104: Assumes salary of $85k for Proposed Executive Director/Founding School Principal in Year 0 (1.0 FTE status in Year 0; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 with base salary of $108k on Step 0; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5).
Office Manager	Code 72410 119: Assumes salary of $45k for Office Manager in Years 0-1 (0.25 FTE status in Year 0 from April to June on Step 0; 1.0 FTE status in Year 1 on Step 0; 2% annual increase in Years 2-5).
Office Secretary	Code 72410 161: Assumes base salary of $35k with 2% annual increase for School Receptionist in Years 1-5 (1.0 FTE status in Years 1-5).
School Resource Officer	Code 72130 170: Assumes salary of $75k for School Resource Officer (1.0 FTE in Years 1-2 and 2.0 FTE in Years 3-5).
Part-time After School Program Staff & Summer School Staff	Code 73300 169: Assumes $20 per hour for after school program Staff on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday, and Fridays from 3:30 PM to 6:00 PM, and on Wednesdays from 1:30 PM to 6:00 PM, to support dismissal and transition to the after-school program (1.0 PTE in Year 1; 2 PTE in Years 2-3; and 3.0 PTE in Years 4-5); only eligible for Unemployment Compensation. Beginning in Year 3, assumes $25 per hour for two Summer School Licensed Teachers from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Mondays thru Fridays for 20 days in June. Beginning Year 3, assumes $15 per hour for two Summer School Teachers-in-Residence from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM Mondays thru Fridays for 20 days in June.
Performance-based Incentives	<up to $3,000> EOY Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 3 with Grade 3. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with “Met Expectations” or “Exceeded Expectations” performance levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $600 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,800); $1,800 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $300 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $900). $900 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with Level 3 (evidence that the students made growth as expected), Level 4 (moderate evidence that the students made more growth than expected), and/or Level 5 (significant evidence that the students made more growth than expected) effectiveness levels in English/Language Arts (grades 3-8), Math (grades 3-8), Science (grades 3-8), and Social Studies (grades 6-8). • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $400 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $1,200). $1,200 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $200 per assessment in grades 3-5 (totaling up to $600). $600 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 5; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. <up to $3,000> English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21): • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate

	• TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1. Achievement: Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with a qualifying score for exit of 4 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening. • Assumes $1,800 for Licensed ESL Teachers with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $900 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth: Meet/exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars with the following scores: only one 2 and/or two or more scores of 3 or above in the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening; an overall proficiency level of Progressing. • Assumes $1,200 for Licensed ESL Teacher with 2.0 FTE in Year 1; 3.0 FTE in Year 2; 4.0 FTE in Year 3; 5.0 FTE in Year 4; and 6.0 FTE in Year 5. • Assumes $600 for Teachers in Residence in the Two-Educator Classroom with 1.0 FTE in Year 1; 1.0 FTE in Year 2; 2.0 FTE in Year 3; 2.0 FTE in Year 4; and 3.0 FTE in Year 5. <up to $2,500> EOY NWEA MAP Assessments • 95% Teacher Attendance Rate • TEAM Evaluation Cumulative Score: 3 (At Expectations) or above. • Beginning in Year 1 with Grades K-1. Achievement (shows how scholars are performing compared to their current grade-level peers): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected RIT Score as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science. • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $375 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,500). $1,500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $187.50 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $750). $750 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. Growth (shows how much growth scholars have experienced since the previous assessments, regardless of whether they are performing at grade level or not): Meet or exceed the schoolwide goal percentage of scholars who met/exceeded their Projected Growth as evidenced by the final (spring) assessment in Reading, Language, Math, and Science. • Licensed Teachers: Assumes $250 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $1,000). $1,000 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught with 14.0 FTE in Year 1; 21.0 FTE in Year 2; 28.0 FTE in Year 3; 35.0 FTE in Year 4; and 41.0 FTE in Year 5. • Teachers in Residence and School Counselors: Assumes $125 per assessment in grades K-5 (totaling up to $500). $500 in grades 6-8, respectively by grade level and subject taught in the Two-Educator Classroom with 10.0 FTE in Year 1; 14.0 FTE in Year 2; 19.0 FTE in Year 3; 23.0 FTE in Year 4; and 27.0 FTE in Year 5. < $1500> Retention Bonus with 95% Attendance Rate to be paid annually in October of the upcoming school year. Assumes 5.0 FTE Founding Staff Members to be paid in October Year 1 for Year 0 returners; 30.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 2 for Year 1 returners; 43.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 3 for Year 2 returners; 68.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 4 for Year 3 returners; and 78.0 FTE to be paid in October Year 5 for Year 4 returners.
Employee Benefits (9 expenditures)	
Employee Benefits (see Tab 4 on **Attachment W** for more details)	• Code 71100 201: Assumes 6.20% of all wages for Social Security • Code 71100 204: TCRS Legacy assumes 9% of all wages for 15% of FTE. • Code 71100 206: Assumes 0.1% of all wages for Life Insurance. • Code 71100 207: Assumes $5500 per FTE for medical insurance (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5).

	• Code 71100 208: Assumes $375 per FTE for dental and vision insurance (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5). • Code 71100 210: Assumes $400 per FTE for unemployment compensation (2.25 FTE in Year 0; 31.0 FTE in Year 1; 43.0 FTE in Year 2; 57.0 FTE in Year 3; 68.0 FTE in Year 4; 78.0 FTE in Year 5). Assumes $200 per PTE for unemployment compensation (1.0 PTE in Year 1; 2.0 PTE in Year 2; 6.0 PTE in Year 3; 7.0 PTE in Years 4-5). • Code 71100 211: Empower Local Retirement assumes 9% of all wages for 50% of FTE. • Code 71100 212: Assumes 1.45% of all wages for Employer Medicare. • Code 71100 217: TCRS Hybrid assumes 9% of all wages for 35% of FTE.
Contracted Services (21 expenditures)	
Advertising	Code 72520 302 • Assumes $5k in Year 0 for Student and Staff Recruitment (i.e., social media, community events, travel, school swag, etc.). • Assumes $10k in Years 1-5 for Student and Staff Recruitment (i.e., social media, community events, travel, school swag, etc.). • Assumes $1500 in Years 0-5 for Parent & Staff Meetings. • Assumes $5k in Year 0 and $4k in Years 1-5 for Marketing & Advertising with GrowthFuel Marketing in Connection with EdConnect. • Assumes $30 per new student for uniform voucher (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Architect	Code 91300 304: Assumes $5k for 2 feasibility studies for proposed facilities options with Ethan Levin.
Audit Services	Code 72310 305 • Assumes $2k in Year 0 for 990 Services. • Assumes $17k in Years 1-5 for Auditing Services ($15k) and 990 Services ($2k).
Consultants	Code 72210 308 • Assumes $15k in Years 0-2 for BES Follow-on Support. • Assumes $10,995 in Years 0-5 for BoardOnTrack services.
Data Processing Services	Code 72110 317 • Assumes $52,575 in Year 0 for PowerSchool SIS license and subscription fees, professional services and setup fees, and training services. • Assumes $18,585 in Years 1-5 for PowerSchool SIS license and subscription fees and the Unified Operations Enrollment and Lottery System.
Dues & Memberships	Code 72510 320: Assumes $0 per month for currently-open Horizon 75 Business Checking Account with Pinnacle Financial Partners
Evaluation & Testing	Code 72130 322: Assumes $200 per student for assessments and Blended Learning with FastBridge, Progress Learning, NWEA MAP, IXL, and Imagine MyPath for ELL.
Janitorial Services	Code 72610 328: Assumes $0.15 per square foot per month for Custodial Services, including all materials, with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0); 14,375 sf in Year 2; 20,000 sf in Year 3; 25,750 sf in Year 4; and 28,750 sf in Year 5.
Legal Services	Code 72310 331: Assumes $3750 in Year 0 for potential legal fees. Assumes $7500 in Years 1-5 for potential legal fees.
Maintenance & Repair Services Building	Code 72620 335: Assumes $3 per square foot for Maintenance & Repair Services, including materials and equipment, with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0); 14,375 sf in Year 2; 20,000 sf in Year 3; 25,750 sf in Year 4; and 28,750 sf in Year 5.
Medical and Dental Services	Code 72710 340: Assumes $4k per month from August to May in Years 1-5 for School Nurse contracted services.
Payments to Schools-Breakfast	Code 73100 342: Assumes $2 per day (180 days) for breakfast per scholar enrolled (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).

Payments to Schools-Lunch	Code 73100 343: Assumes $3.50 per day (180 days) for lunch per scholar enrolled (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).
Postal Charges	Code 72110 348: Assumes $5 per scholar for postal charges with 192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5.
Internet Connectivity	Code 72250 350 • Assumes $300 in Year 0 for Technology Lab new school consulting. • Assumes $3k in Year 0 for Technology Lab onboarding fee. • Assumes $118.80 per employee for managed services with Technology Lab (5.0 FTE in Year 0; 30.5 FTE in Year 1; 43 in Year 2; 57 in Year 3; 68 in Year 4; 78 in Year 5). Assumes $9k in Years 1-5 for Internet and Phone Services. • Assumes $6k for Internet Services in Year 0 and $12k in Years 1-5 respectively.
Rentals	Code 72610 351: Assumes $20 per square foot for Rent per year with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (3 months in Year 0), 14,375 sf in Year 2, 20,000 sf in Year 3, 25,750 sf in Year 4, and 28,750 sf in Year 5).
Travel	Code 72210 355: Assumes 2 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $482.01 per day for 180 days in Year 1 with 70% participation (135 students; buses total: $260,287.02). Assumes 3 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $501.29 per day for 180 days in Year 2 with 70% participation (202 students; buses total: $360,931.33). Assumes 4 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $521.35 per day for 180 days in Year 3 with 70% participation (269 students; buses total: $469,210.73). Assumes 5 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $542.20 per day for 180 days in Year 4 with 70% participation (336 students; buses total: $585,575.00). Assumes 6 regular education buses and 1 special education bus for $563.89 per day for 180 days in Year 5 with 70% participation (403 students; buses total: $710,497.66). Assumes $4000 per grade level for annual field trips and after-school activities (will conduct the RFP vendor process).
Disposal Fees	Code 72610 359: Assumes $200 per month for waste disposal (3 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5).
Contracts for Substitute Teachers Certified	Code 71100 369: Assumes $150 per day (10 days) for Certified Substitute Teachers in the place of General Education Teachers (8 in Year 1; 12 in Year 2; 16 in Year 3; 20 in Year 4; 24 in Year 5).
Contracts for Substitute Teachers Non-Certified	Code 71100 370: Assumes $75 per day (10 days) for Certified Substitute Teachers in the place of General Education Teachers (8 in Year 1; 12 in Year 2; 16 in Year 3; 20 in Year 4; 24 in Year 5).
Other Contracted Services	• Code 72510 399: Assumes $4k per month for Financial Management with EdTec for Reporting & Compliance, Cash Flow Management, Payroll & Retirement, and Business and Advisory (6 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5). • Code 71400 399: Assumes $37k in Year 1; $42,700 in Year 2; $78,550 in Year 3; $102,950 in Year 4; and $148,350 in Year 5 for Special Education Contracted Services with Project Play Therapy.
Supplies & Materials (8 expenditures)	
Drugs & Medical Supplies	Code 72120 413: Assumes $200 per classroom and office space in Years 0-5 for Health Kits (1 in Year 0; 3 in Year 1; 6 in Year 2; 8 in Year 3; 6 in Year 4; 5 in Year 5).
Electricity	Code 72610 415: Assumes $2 per square foot per year for Utilities with 10,625 sf in Years 0-1 (6 months in Year 0), 14,375 sf in Year 2, 20,000 sf in Year 3, 25,750 sf in Year 4, and 28,750 sf in Year 5).
Instructional Supplies & Materials	Code 71100 429: Assumes $400 per student for curricula resources and consumable materials in ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, RTI2-Academics/Behavior Academic Resources (i.e., Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum for Grades K-5, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's (HMH) Read 180 curriculum for Grades 6-8, and $10k per school year for CharacterStrong), and Related Arts (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).
Library Books/Media	Code 72210 432: Assumes $20 per new student for classroom libraries (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).

Office Supplies	Code 72250 435 • Assumes $800 in Years 1-2 for one copier lease and usage. Assumes $1600 in Years 3-5 for two copiers lease and usage. • Assumes $200 per FTE for faculty supplies (5.0 FTE in Year 0; 29 in Year 1; 42 in Year 2; 55 in Year 3; 66 in Year 4; 76 in Year 5; excludes School Resource Officers who will use schoolwide office supplies). • Assumes $5k for schoolwide office supplies in Years 1-5.
Water & Sewer	Code 72610 454: Assumes $200 per month for water and sewer (3 months in Year 0; 12 months in Years 1-5).
Cabling	Code 72250 470: Assumes $3500 for average market rate for cabling installation.

Other Supplies and Materials	• Code 71100 499: Assumes $20 per student for printing paper (192 in Year 1; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).
	• Code 72250 499
	  ○ Assumes $1k per FTE for faculty laptops (5.0 in Year 0; 27.0 in Year 1; 12.0 in Year 2; 14.0 in Year 3; 12.0 in Year 4; 11.0 in Year 5).
	  ○ Assumes $500 per student laptop cart (8 in Year 1; 4 in Years 2-5). Assumes $400 per new student laptop (192 in Year 1; 96 in Years 2-5).

Contracted Services (3 expenditures)	
Liability Insurance	Code 72310 506 • Assumes $3750 for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Year 0. • Assumes $7500 per year for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Years 1-5. • Assumes $5k per grade level for D and O liability insurance and building and content insurance in Years 1-5 (K-1 in Year 1; K-2 in Year 2 K-3 in Year 3; K-4 in Year 4; K-5 in Year 5).
In-Service & Staff Development	Code 72210 524: Assumes $2500 in Year 0 and $5k in Years 1-5 and beyond for professional development.
Other Charges	Code 71400 599 • Assumes $25 per FTE for gifts and awards in Years 0-5 (5.0 in Year 0; 32.0 in Year 1; 45.0 in Year 2; 63.0 in Year 3; 75.0 in Year 4; 85.0 in Year 5). • Assumes $25 per student for gifts and awards in Years 1-5 (192 in Year; 288 in Year 2; 384 in Year 3; 480 in Year 4; 576 in Year 5).
Debt Service (1 expenditure)	
Other Debt Service	Code 82330 699: Assumes $35k for authorizer fee in Years 1-5.
Capital Outlay (2 expenditures)	
Building Improvements	Code 76100 707: Assumes $1M for Building Improvements in Year 0 to open and operate in Year 1.
Furniture and Fixtures	Code 91300 711 • Assumes $500 per FTE (5.0) for staff furniture in Year 0. • Assumes $300 per student for student furniture (192 in Year 1; 96 in Year 2; 96 in Year 3; 96 in Year 5; 96 in Year 5). • Assumes $500 per FTE for staff furniture in Years 1-5 (27.0 in Year 1; 13.0 in Year 2; 15.0 in Year 3; 13.0 in Year 4; 12.0 in Year 5). • Assumes $2k per classroom for additional equipment (i.e., doc cameras, projectors, etc.) in Years 1-5 (11 in Year 1; 5 in Year 2; 7 in Year 3; 5 in Year 4; 4 in Year 5). • Assumes $5k for building decorum in Years 0-5.

Section 3.2f: Explain how one or more high-needs students with disabilities may affect the operating budget and your plan to meet student needs that might be more than anticipated.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) recognizes the importance of providing high-quality support for scholars with disabilities, including those with high-needs. These needs can have significant financial implications, as costs for accommodations, specialized services, and instructional materials may exceed state and federal funding allocations. By maximizing funding, maintaining contingency plans, and prioritizing efficient service delivery, the school will ensure access to a high-quality education for scholars with disabilities while safeguarding its operational stability.

State and Federal Allocations. The Tennessee Department of Education provides an allocation of approximately $1,500 per scholar with special needs. Depending on the scholar's Individualized Education Program (IEP), expenses can include specialized staff, assistive technology, therapeutic services, and transportation, which may exceed the base funding. Our budget reflects an additional $25k per school year for transportation and additional funding for contracted services that will be provided through Project Play for more specialized student supports. On an as-needed basis, we will hire additional Teachers in Residence for students who require more specialized student supports. Should additional Special Education Teachers and or Teachers in Residence need to be hired, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize hiring additional full-time employees to meet the needs of our scholars.

Unpredictable Federal Funding Disbursements. While federal funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides additional support, delays in disbursement may create temporary cash flow challenges. Services for high-needs scholars, such as one-on-one aides (known as Teachers in Residence), occupational therapy, and adaptive equipment, can require substantial additional resources through our contracted services providers. To support in mitigating these delays, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will ensure accurate and timely reporting of all scholars with disabilities to secure maximum state and federal funding. This verification process will ensure compliance with reporting requirements to avoid delays in allocations. Otherwise, we will pursue additional federal and state grants targeted at special education services.

Contingency Planning for Funding Gaps. To address delays in federal funding, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will utilize short-term financial solutions. As a last resort, we will secure access to a line of credit to cover short-term cash flow gaps caused by delays in federal funding. Interest costs will be minimized by repaying the line of credit promptly upon receipt of federal funds. As we develop over time, we will maintain an operating reserve to buffer unexpected increases in special education costs. Resources will be allocated to high-priority areas, such as direct services and accommodations, before other initiatives. As enrollment grows, the budget will scale to include additional reserves and specialized staff, ensuring sustainability.

Staffing and Resource Allocation. Our current staffing model will be adjusted to meet the needs of scholars with disabilities without compromising financial stability. We will rely heavily on Project Play, our contracted services provider, to provide the specialized services our scholars need. Should scholars require additional services outside of what Project Play has the capacity to offer, our Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance budget will collaborate with the Edtec, the Board Treasurer, and members of the Finance Committee to prioritize hiring additional full-time employees to meet the needs of our scholars. EdTec will help us to adopt a flexible staffing approach, ensuring adequate support while avoiding overstaffing, and we will provide all instructional staff with ongoing professional learning and development to support our scholars appropriately.

Section 3.2g: Describe the systems, processes, and policies by which the proposed school will manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits. Include any policies on financial controls.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed robust systems, processes, and policies to manage accounting, purchasing, payroll, and audits while ensuring strict compliance with federal and state regulations. With guidance and support from EdTec, a social enterprise specializing in charter school operations and performance services, the school will implement the following strategies:

Accounting and Financial Management. Our Board Treasurer in partnership with our Finance Committee will oversee financial management and ensure compliance with Tennessee and federal accounting standards. We will also leverage EdTec's expertise to establish comprehensive financial management systems for budgeting, reporting, and cash flow tracking. Together, we will adopt an accrual-based accounting system to provide accurate, real-time financial reporting and align with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Financial Controls. We will implement fiscal control policies to safeguard assets, monitor expenditures, and ensure transparency. EdTec will work with our Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, alongside our Finance Committee, to develop a system of checks and balances that will require dual approvals for all major financial transactions. Monthly financial reports, including profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and cash flow analyses, will always be reviewed by the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee.

Purchasing. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to ensuring efficient and transparent purchasing processes while maintaining fiscal responsibility. To achieve this, the school will establish a competitive bidding system for significant purchases, ensuring cost-effectiveness and vendor accountability. A purchase order system will be implemented to streamline approvals and monitor spending limits for all goods and services. All expenditures will require thorough documentation, including receipts and invoices, which will undergo a review process by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance. Final approval for such expenditures will rest with the Proposed Executive Director and the Board Treasurer. To further strengthen financial oversight, discretionary spending will be limited, and spending thresholds requiring prior Board approval

will be established. Vendor contracts will be periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the school's budgetary goals and quality standards.

When selecting vendors, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will employ a rigorous and competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process for all bids exceeding $15,000. This process will ensure that vendors meet the academy's high standards for quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness. The first step in this process involves establishing clear criteria for vendor selection. These criteria will prioritize safety, reliability, and experience working with charter schools, as well as compliance with state and federal regulations.

Once proposals are submitted, the selection process will involve a thorough evaluation by a committee led by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, with support from the Assistant Principal of Scholar Access. Vendors will be assessed based on key factors such as their safety records, maintenance protocols, compliance with state and federal requirements, capacity to provide specialized transportation, community engagement, customer service track record, and alignment with the academy's budget.

Shortlisted vendors will be invited for interviews and site visits, allowing the committee to gain a deeper understanding of their operations and to verify their compliance with safety protocols and service expectations. After the interviews and site visits, the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will negotiate the contract terms with the selected vendor. These contracts will include comprehensive Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to define performance standards, communication expectations, and reporting requirements. By adhering to this structured and transparent approach, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) ensures that all vendors meet the highest standards while supporting the school's mission and operational goals.

Payroll Management. Payroll services will be managed through EdTec, our back-office services provider, using a secure and compliant payroll system. Our Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with EdTec to ensure timely and accurate disbursement of salaries and benefits, with proper withholding of taxes and retirement contributions. We will adopt written payroll procedures outlining payment schedules, time tracking, and compliance with labor laws, and conduct periodic internal reviews to verify the accuracy of payroll records and prevent discrepancies.

Audit and Compliance. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contract with an independent auditor to conduct an annual financial audit, ensuring compliance with federal and state laws. The Finance Committee will oversee the audit process and ensure that findings and recommendations are addressed promptly. The audit will include a review of internal controls, financial statements, and compliance with Tennessee Department of Education requirements.

Federal and State Reporting. Our Finance Committee will collaborate with EdTec to ensure timely submission of all required financial reports to include quarterly and annual financial reports to the Tennessee Department of Education, federal grant expenditure reports, and IRS Form 990 for nonprofit organizations. We will also publish annual financial audits and reports on the school's website for public review and provide regular financial updates to the Board of Directors to maintain accountability.

Preparation During the Planning Year

- **Board Governance.** The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee will oversee the process of establishing accounts and reviewing fiscal control policies. They will also secure contracts with both EdTec and the auditor to ensure financial readiness. These processes will ensure successful adoption of fiscal policies and procedures to align with state and local requirements.
- **School-based Management.** The Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will participate in financial management training provided by EdTec to ensure full compliance and school-based operational readiness.

By implementing these systems and leveraging EdTec's expertise, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will maintain fiscal accountability and transparency, ensuring that financial resources are effectively managed to support its mission and long-term sustainability.

Section 3.2h: Describe how the proposed school will provide an independent annual audit and comply with other federal or state accounting and/or reporting requirements.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to financial transparency, accountability, and compliance with all state and federal regulations. To ensure fiscal integrity, the school will contract an independent auditor to conduct an annual audit in accordance with the Tennessee Department of Education's requirements and applicable federal guidelines. This audit will provide a comprehensive review of the school's financial statements, internal controls, and adherence to legal and regulatory standards.

The independent auditor, licensed by the State of Tennessee and experienced in auditing charter schools, will be selected through a thorough vetting process led by the Finance Committee. The committee will recommend a qualified auditing firm to the Board of Directors for approval. Once engaged, the auditor will conduct a rigorous assessment of the school's financial records, ensuring that all funds, including state allocations and federal grants such as Title I, are utilized appropriately and in compliance with statutory requirements.

EdTec, a financial services provider, will support Novus SMART Academy (K-8) by preparing detailed monthly financial reports. These reports will be reviewed by the Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of

Operations and Finance before being presented to the Board of Directors. The Board will provide oversight, ensuring that financial operations remain aligned with best practices and regulatory expectations.

Upon completion of the audit, the independent auditor will present a report summarizing the school's financial health, any identified discrepancies, and recommended improvements. The Finance Committee, in collaboration with school leadership, will address any audit findings, implementing corrective measures as necessary to maintain compliance. The final audit report will then be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Education and other relevant state agencies, as required by law.

In addition to the annual audit, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) to maintain accurate and reliable financial records. The school will comply with all federal and state reporting requirements, ensuring that financial statements, budget reports, and grant expenditures are meticulously documented. By maintaining rigorous financial oversight and proactively addressing any compliance concerns, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will uphold its commitment to responsible financial stewardship, safeguarding the resources entrusted to it in service of its mission to provide a high-quality education to its scholars.

Section 3.2i: Describe the different financial roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's administration and governing board.

In the financial management structure of the proposed Novus SMART Academy (K-8), the administration and governing board will play distinct but complementary roles.

Governing Board. The governing board oversees the school's fiscal health and ensures financial accountability and compliance with legal and ethical standards. Key responsibilities include:

- Strategic Oversight
  - Approve annual budgets and ensure alignment with the school's mission and strategic goals.
  - Monitor long-term financial planning, including contingency plans for funding and enrollment fluctuations.
- Fiscal Policy Setting
  - Develop, review, and approve financial policies and procedures.
- Establish internal controls and appropriate segregation of duties to safeguard assets and prevent misuse of funds.
- Audit and Compliance
  - Oversee annual independent financial audits.
- Ensure compliance with state, federal, and charter-specific financial regulations.
- Monitor adherence to grant and donor requirements.
- Performance Monitoring
  - Review monthly financial reports, including income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements.
- Assess financial benchmarks such as enrollment, fundraising, and expenditure trends.
- Fundraising and Resource Development: Support efforts to secure additional funding through grants, donations, and partnerships.

School Administration. The administration, led by the Proposed Executive Director and supported by the Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, is responsible for day-to-day financial operations and implementing the governing board's policies. Specific duties include:

- Budget Implementation
  - Prepare draft budgets for governing board approval.
- Manage approved budgets and ensure funds are allocated effectively.
- Operational Financial Management
  - In partnership with EdTec, process payroll, vendor payments, and reimbursements.
- Oversee procurement, ensuring cost-effectiveness and compliance with policies.
- Financial Reporting
  - In partnership with EdTec, generate regular financial reports for the governing board and stakeholders.
  - Track expenditures against budgeted amounts and flag variances.
- Compliance and Record-Keeping
- In partnership with EdTec, maintain accurate financial records for audits and reporting requirements.
- Ensure compliance with tax filings, employee benefits, and vendor agreements.
- Training and Readiness: Participate in financial management training (e.g., provided by EdTec) to ensure operational readiness and adherence to best practices.
- Resource Allocation: Support decision-making on staffing, facilities, and instructional resources based on financial data and strategic priorities.

Collaboration Between Governing Board and Administration. The Governing Board of Directors and Proposed Executive Director will work collaboratively to execute healthy financial decisions. Regular communication, reporting, and professional learning and development will ensure both entities are well-informed and aligned to maintain financial stability and transparency.

Section 3.2j: If applicable, describe the plan to outsource any financial management areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, fundraising, accounting, etc. Detail how the financial leadership will select and oversee the contractors.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to maintaining sound financial management by outsourcing key areas such as payroll, benefits, audits, and fundraising to trusted professionals and providers. This approach ensures compliance, efficiency, and sustainability while leveraging external expertise. With guidance from EdTec, a social enterprise specializing in charter school operations, the school will establish processes for contractor selection, oversight, and collaboration. The combination of Board expertise, contractor support, and ongoing professional development creates a robust foundation for effective financial governance.

Accounting Firm and Back-Office Provider. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) plans to contract with EdTec, a highly reputable organization, as the back-office provider (see **Attachment D** for letter of support). EdTec will provide comprehensive financial management services to include payroll processing and benefits administration, preparation of financial reports, including monthly financials and compliance documents, and support for state and federal reporting requirements.

Independent Auditor. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will contract an independent auditor to conduct annual audits and ensure compliance with Tennessee Department of Education and federal requirements. The auditor will work closely with the Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance to address findings and recommendations.

Oversight and Governance. The Board of Directors, led by the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, will oversee all financial contracts and service providers. The contracted auditor will report directly to the Board to ensure accountability and transparency. The Finance Committee will collaborate with the Proposed Executive Director to create and present the annual budget, monitor the approved budget and recommend revisions as needed, and develop and recommend fiscal policies to safeguard the school's assets and maintain compliance with legal requirements. EdTec will provide professional development for the Finance Committee and Board of Directors, equipping them with the skills to govern fiscal affairs effectively. EdTec will also assist in setting up financial systems and processes aligned with charter school best practices.

Addressing Skill Gaps and Building Capacity. To ensure the Finance Committee's long-term sustainability and capacity to govern the school's fiscal affairs, the Founding Board Treasurer brings extensive financial experience and will lead the Finance Committee during the startup phase. The Governance Committee will also leverage BES Follow-on Support and lead the Board's annual self-assessment using the BoardOnTrack evidence-based evaluation tools, involving formal surveys and feedback to identify areas of strength and improvement; especially financial oversight. The Governance Committee will facilitate the processes to create and track goals by committee and/or task force. This will help the Governance Committee to create tasks, assign owners and deadlines, and monitor progress over time. Through this evaluation, the Board remains adaptive and accountable, consistently striving to enhance its contribution to the school's mission. EdTec will also support ongoing training in fiscal governance, policies, and procedures, ensuring the committee remains effective as the school grows.

Financial Reporting and Audit Process. *EdTec will prepare detailed financial reports monthly and present them to the Board for review and will be shared with the authorizer and state as required. The independent auditor will also conduct an annual financial audit and provide a report to the Board. The Finance Committee, Proposed Executive Director, and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will address any audit findings and implement recommendations to ensure compliance.*

Fundraising and Resource Management. *EdTec will also assist the school in managing and tracking fundraising efforts, ensuring proper allocation and reporting of funds raised. All donations and grants will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Directors to ensure alignment with the school's mission and financial goals.*

Section 3.2k: Describe the level of financial expertise of the proposed school's internal and external team members.

Board Treasurer. Daniel Kadeba, our Proposed Board Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, holds a Master of Business Administration and is a Certified Public Accountant. As the Board Treasurer, Daniel will provide direction for the financial management of the school and facilitate the board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities. Daniel will also report to the Board Chair and Board of Directors alongside the Finance Committee, and will receive support from the Proposed Executive Director, Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, EdTec, and Auditors.

As the husband of a dedicated 17-year K-12 licensed educator, Daniel deeply understands the value of education. With two children in the Rutherford County Schools system, he is committed to supporting and enhancing educational opportunities for students. Daniel brings a unique perspective as the treasurer of 501C Education Foundation, which recognizes the significance of education, especially for underserved communities.

Daniel's experience spans various roles, including Managing Consultant at Cross Country Consulting and Financial Analysis Manager at Cigna-Health Spring. His expertise in finance transformation, change management, and strategic initiatives has been evident in his contributions to global insurance clients and shared service departments. Daniel's commitment to community leadership is demonstrated through his involvement in Employee Resource Groups, mentorship, and contributions to organizations like the March of Dimes and Big Brother Big Sister of Middle Tennessee.

With a Master of Business Administration from Tennessee State University and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and Computer Sciences from Austin Peay State University, Daniel is a Certified Public Accountant and a Certified ScrumMaster. His diverse skill set, leadership experience, and dedication to education make him an asset to any endeavor focused on fostering positive change and supporting the growth of future leaders.

The specific responsibilities of the Board Treasurer are as follows:

11. Chair of the Finance Committee.
12. Provides direction for the oversight of the school's record keeping and accounting policies.
13. Ensures the presentation of timely and meaningful financial reports to the board to ensure that the full board completely understands the financial picture.
14. Ensures the development of the annual budget and its submission to the Board for its approval. Leads the monitoring of budget implementation.
15. Oversees the development and board review of financial policies and procedures. With the Finance Committee, monitors the adherence to financial policies and procedures adopted by the Board.
16. Develops and monitors any investment policies adopted by the Board.
17. Ensures that assets are protected and invested according to board policy.
18. Leads the board in assuring compliance with federal, state and other financial reporting requirements.
19. Presents the recommendation of the auditor to the Board for their approval. Reviews the results of the audit with the Finance Committee, including the management letter, develops a plan for remediation, if necessary, and presents the results to the Board.
20. Takes responsibility for the design of an annual board education program so that all board members can effectively conduct oversight of the financial health of the organization.

The qualifications of the Board Treasurer are as follows:

5. Commitment to and energy to support the charter school's mission, goals, and core values.
6. An understanding of the distinctions between governance and management.
7. A strong understanding of the record keeping accounting systems, financial reports and financial policies and procedures of the organization.
8. Ability to focus on both the short-term and long-term financial health of the organization.

Indicators of effectiveness are as follows:

5. Meets annual goals as identified and adopted by the board at the beginning of the leadership term.
6. Is perceived by other board members as being transparent and efficient in delivering financial reports and as being aggressively protective of the integrity of the organization's fiscal management.
7. Is perceived by staff as supporting and adding value to their work.
8. Is perceived by most parents and other community members as being accessible, fair, constructive, and representative of the interests of the broader school community.

Finance Committee. The Finance Committee has responsibility for working with the Proposed Executive Director to create the upcoming fiscal year budget; present budget recommendations to the Board; monitor implementation of the approved budget on a regular basis and recommend proposed budget revisions; and recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the organization's assets. The Finance Committee is assisted by the Proposed Executive Director. The members of the Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer of the Board who shall serve as Chair, the Board Chair who shall serve as an ex-officio member, together with other Board members appointed by the Chair with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the Bylaws.

The specific responsibilities of the Finance Committee are as follows:

9. Review, and recommend to the Board for approval, an annual budget for Novus SMART Academy (K-8) in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director.
10. Also in collaboration with the Proposed Executive Director, review and recommend to the Board for approval and annually revise a three-year financial forecast and long range financial plans based on the forecast.
11. Review grant proposals when required by funders, and when necessary, recommend action by the Board.
12. Review all non-budgeted expenditures over a set dollar amount to be determined by the Board and recommend action to the Board.
13. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
14. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on the same to the Board of Directors.
15. Arrange for an annual audit with submission of the same to the Board.
16. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Section 3.2l: Describe the proposed school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected.

Contingency Planning for Financial Stability. Novus SMART Academy (K–8) has developed a comprehensive contingency plan to ensure financial stability in the event that anticipated revenues are delayed or fall short. As a tuition-free public charter school, the majority of our funding is tied directly to student enrollment. A shortfall in enrollment would significantly reduce per-pupil funding, potentially leading to budget deficits and threatening essential fixed costs such as staff salaries, facilities, and operational expenses. To proactively address this risk, we have established a strategic framework designed to preserve our mission and ensure uninterrupted educational services.

Proactive Enrollment Strategy. Understanding the critical role of enrollment in our financial health, Novus SMART Academy is implementing an aggressive student recruitment and community outreach strategy well ahead of the school's opening. To date, we have partnered with Meredith McGann, Director of Policy & Outreach at Tennesseans for Student Success, and GrowthFuel Marketing to strengthen our community engagement. Together, we have launched targeted marketing campaigns,

including outreach to 599 families with children aged 4 to 7 in the 37167 and 37086 zip codes. These families were selected based on high likelihood scores (80–100) for both School Switch and School Choice, increasing the probability of converting interest into enrollment. These efforts are designed to build a strong applicant pipeline and enhance the likelihood of meeting or exceeding enrollment targets.

Scenario Modeling and Financial Flexibility. Novus SMART Academy has developed multiple enrollment models, including a conservative scenario based on achieving 75% of the target enrollment. Each model incorporates intentional cost-reduction strategies that allow us to maintain essential academic operations and remain financially solvent under varying conditions.

Scalable Staffing and Cost Management. Hiring at Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will be phased and aligned with actual enrollment rather than projections. This approach ensures personnel costs remain sustainable and responsive to confirmed revenue. In the event of under-enrollment, the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance will collaborate with EdTec, the Board Treasurer, and the Finance Committee to prioritize expenditures. Core expenses, such as instructional materials and staff compensation, will be safeguarded, while non-essential items, such as certain furniture purchases, advanced technology not critical to operations, and specialty equipment, may be deferred or eliminated.

Long-Term Financial Resilience. In addition to immediate mitigation strategies, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has also implemented long-term financial planning to address broader risks. This includes conducting detailed cost analyses of pre-opening expenses, actively seeking startup grants and philanthropic support, and delaying non-critical purchases until enrollment numbers are confirmed. Our staff retention strategy, which features competitive compensation, robust onboarding, and meaningful professional development, also serves to minimize costly turnover.

Diversification of Revenue. To reduce over-reliance on public funding, we are actively diversifying our revenue sources. This includes pursuing private donations, community sponsorships, and in-kind contributions, while applying for grants to support key academic initiatives and professional development programs.

Facilities and Operational Preparedness. To prepare for potential delays or cost overruns related to facility readiness, we have enlisted experienced real estate professionals and built in ample time for contingency planning. Alternative facility options have also been identified to ensure we can remain on schedule.

Through deliberate planning, strong oversight, and a mission-driven approach, Novus SMART Academy (K–8) is well-positioned to navigate financial uncertainties. Our comprehensive contingency planning ensures that we can continue delivering an extraordinary, high-quality educational experience to every scholar, regardless of financial fluctuations.

Section 3.2m: Detail the cash flow contingency plan if revenue projections are not met or expenditures exceed anticipated amounts. The plan should include an explanation of sources, including financing terms, if the contingency plan includes loans, commitments, funds from an outside donor, or an alternative funding source.

Novus SMART Academy (K-8) has developed a robust contingency plan to address potential financial challenges, ensuring operational stability and continuity even in the face of revenue shortfalls or unexpected expenditures. This plan reflects a commitment to financial prudence, flexibility, and sustainability.

Revenue Shortfall Contingency Plan. Revenue has been conservatively estimated based on the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) funding model, ensuring that any overperformance in enrollment or funding will bolster the school's financial position.

Secured Grants & Commitments. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) secured $1.53M in grants and a $250k commitment from Building Hope to support facilities costs post-authorization (see **Attachment D)**. Overall, this funding will cover startup and operational costs during our critical early years (Years 0-2).

Capital Campaigns and Fundraising. Post-authorization, the Development Committee will launch capital campaigns to secure additional funding from philanthropic donors and local supporters. Relationships with local funders in Metro Nashville and Rutherford County will enhance our financial stability.

Alternative Financing Sources. As a last resort, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will apply for an interest-free line of credit through The New Neighbor Group, LLC, with up to $1M available to address cash flow gaps. The Proposed Executive Director is actively engaged in discussions with The New Neighbor Group, ensuring this option remains viable if needed.

Cash Flow Management. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will use secured grants and funding as the primary source of cash flow support during Years 0-2. If delays in state or federal revenue disbursements occur when we open in Year 1, Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will apply for the interest-free line of credit through The New Neighbor Group, LLC, with up to $1M available as a backup option.

Short-Term Financing: To address potential cash flow challenges during the startup years, the academy will consider securing a short-term loan or line of credit. Borrowing will be limited to essential operational needs, with loan amounts based on projected gaps between revenues and critical expenditures. Repayment plans will align with anticipated revenue growth in Years 3-5, ensuring financial sustainability over time.

Vendor Payment Terms. The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee, alongside the Proposed Executive Director and Assistant Principal of Operations and Finance, will negotiate extended or deferred payment terms with vendors, particularly for lease agreements and contracted services, to alleviate cash flow pressures. Expenditure adjustments may include delaying equipment purchases, renegotiating service contracts, or postponing staffing hires that do not compromise the instructional model and programming.

Expense Management and Mitigation Strategies. If a material revenue or expense variance exceeds 20%, the Board of Directors will call for a budget reevaluation by the Finance Committee and implement necessary adjustments. Staffing plans will be reviewed with all hires, delayed start dates, and/or reductions in positions considered to align with revised budgetary constraints that do not compromise the instructional model and programming.

Facilities Flexibility. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) plans to secure a facility lease that operates on an “as utilized” basis. If this arrangement cannot be secured, the budget includes provisions to lease a facility appropriate for the school’s needs in Years 1-5, with an option to relocate as the school grows.

Oversight and Monitoring. The Board Treasurer and Finance Committee will regularly monitor financial performance, reviewing monthly financial reports to identify and address potential shortfalls early with our proposed back office services provider, Edtec. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) will collaborate with EdTec to implement robust financial controls, cash flow monitoring, and compliance measures, ensuring financial stability and adherence to state and federal requirements.

Long-Term Sustainability. Novus SMART Academy (K-8) is committed to maintaining a positive fund balance across all five years of operation. Contingency plans will focus on achieving long-term financial sustainability, ensuring that short-term challenges do not compromise the school’s mission. By preparing for potential revenue shortfalls and cash flow challenges through diversified financing sources, expenditure flexibility, and strong oversight, the school is well-positioned to navigate financial uncertainties while remaining focused on delivering a high-quality educational experience for scholars and families.

Attachment Y Cover Page

Network Financial Plan

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED "YES" TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 3

Attachment Y – Page

Attachment Z Cover Page

Portfolio and Performance Template

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED "YES" TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

NOTE: Sponsors must submit the completed Portfolio and Performance Template as a separate document.

Attachment AA Cover Page

Performance and Evaluation Reports

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED "YES" TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Attachment AA – Page

Attachment BB Cover Page

Renewal and Interim Reports

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Attachment BB – Page

Attachment CC Cover Page

Annual Reports

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Attachment DD Cover Page

Litigation Documents

REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Attachment DD – Page

Attachment EE Cover Page

Audited Financial Statements
REQUIRED IF ANSWERED “YES” TO SPONSOR HISTORY AND INTENT QUESTION 1

Fund 141 - General Purpose School

Budget Amendment #4

Charter School Trueup Amendment

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Decreases	Increases	Amended Budget
39000		Unassigned Fund Balance	94,722,033	175,854		94,546,179
Total Fund Balance			**94,722,033**	175,854	0	**94,546,179**

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Increases	Decreases	Amended Budget
72310	312	Board Of Education - Contracts W/ Private Agencies	5,292,827	175,854		5,468,681
72310 Total			**13,981,450**	175,854	0	**14,157,304**
Fund 141 Total			**590,977,845**	175,854	0	**591,153,699**

This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $175,854.00 to account for the FY24-25 charter schools final true-up. This was not a budgeted amount in the FY24-25 budget due to not being able to determine the the increase in ADM's and actual revenue and expenditures for that fiscal year. This is potentially a reoccurring budget amendment every fiscal year because it is extremely difficult to be able to determine actual numbers for every charter school when developing the budget. It is required to be amended from fund balance because this is payment to the charters for the previous year's students, revenue, and expenditures.

Recommended Motion:

To amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the charter schools final true-up as presented.

Dr. James Sullivan, Director of Schools

Date

Claire Maxwell, Chairman of the Board

Fund 141 - General Purpose School

Budget Amendment #5

McFadden Properties Amendment

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Decreases	Increases	Amended Budget
39000		Unassigned Fund Balance	94,722,033	65,000		94,657,033
Total Fund Balance			**94,722,033**	65,000	0	**94,657,033**

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Increases	Decreases	Amended Budget
72310	715	Board Of Education - Land	0	65,000		65,000
72310 Total			**13,981,450**	65,000	0	**13,981,450**
Fund 141 Total			**590,977,845**	65,000	0	**591,042,845**

This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $65,000 to fund the deposits of earnest money and appraisals of 5 McFadden properties. This amendment will transfer money by decreasing Fund 141 39000-Unassigned Fund Balance and increasing Board of Education account 72310-715- Land in the amount of $65,000.

Recommended Motion:

To amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the McFadden property(s) deposits as presented.

Dr. James Sullivan, Director of Schools

Date

Claire Maxwell, Chairman of the Board

Fund 141 - General Purpose School

Budget Amendment #6

Maple Street Property Amendment

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Decreases	Increases	Amended Budget
39000		Unassigned Fund Balance	94,722,033	10,000		94,712,033
Total Fund Balance			**94,722,033**	10,000	0	**94,712,033**

Function	Object	Description	2026 Budget	Increases	Decreases	Amended Budget
72310	715	Board Of Education - Land	0	10,000		10,000
72310 Total			**13,981,450**	10,000	0	**13,981,450**
Fund 141 Total			**590,977,845**	10,000	0	**590,987,845**

This amendment is to increase General Purpose Fund 141 budgeted expenditures and decrease fund balance in the amount of $10,000 to fund the deposits of earnest money and appraisal for 300 Maple Street, Smyrna Property. This amendment will transfer money by decreasing Fund 141 39000-Unassigned Fund Balance and increasing Board of Education account 72310-715- Land in the amount of $10,000.

Recommended Motion:

To amend the FY 25-26 Fund 141 General Purpose School Budget to reflect the 300 Maple Street Property deposit as presented.

Dr. James Sullivan, Director of Schools

Date

Claire Maxwell, Chairman of the Board

Rutherford County Schools

Application for Campus Construction Project

Before any request for construction of proposed buildings will be forwarded to the Rutherford County School Board, the following form must be filled out in full and submitted to the Rutherford County Schools Engineering and Construction Department with a letter from the School Principal, a site plan, floor plan and elevations (if applicable), a full estimate, and schedule.

1. School Name Central Magnet School
2. Principal Dr. John Ash
3. Project Name World Language Bench
4. Assistant Principal who is overseeing the project Amy Guthre & Michelle Huffman
5. Does project support recreational sports, athletics or education? Education
6. Does this project meet all gender equity criteria? yes
7. What department is this project being constructed for? (I.E. Baseball, softball, band, FFA, etc.)
   World Languages
8. What is the anticipated cost for this project (this should include all utility connection fees, building permits, inspection, and construction). Attach and submit a detailed estimate.
   Project is being donated by MTSU School of Concrete & Construction Management
9. What is the funding source and are funds currently available: (Grant, Booster Club, etc.)List all sources. Project is being donated by MTSU School of Concrete & Construction Management
10. If a grant or funded by a foundation/donor/ charitable organization, what is the foundations name? Project is being donated by MTSU School of Concrete & Construction Management
    Do construction plans meet criteria for funding? yes
11. If funded by a local financial institution, has the loan been approved and who is the guarantor for loan N/A
12. Do you have a site layout showing where this project will be constructed on campus? yes
13. Has RCS Engineering & Construction reviewed project location? Are there any conflicts in utilities or easements? yes
14. Has MTEMC, CUD, MWSD or other local utilities been contacted for service connection if required? N/A
15. Are plans drawn and stamped by Architect/ Engineer? No, drawn by CMS architect teacher

16. Have plans been submitted to Rutherford County Codes or Murfreesboro City Building Codes Offices for review and/or approval. (LaVergne City Codes, Smyrna City Codes, Murfreesboro City Codes) N/A

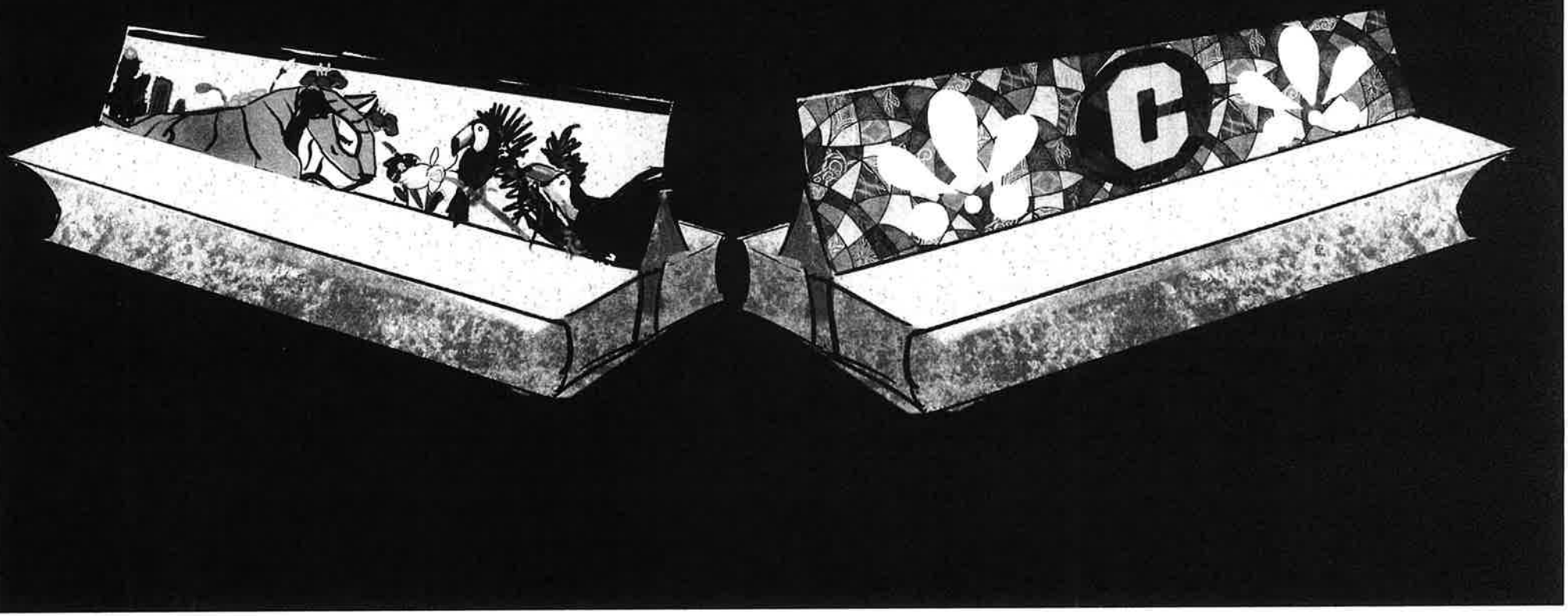
17. What is your time line for completion of project? When will it start and when will it be completed? Built by end of fall 2025 semester

18. If stated that construction project is at no cost to school Board all cost should be included in project. This includes electrical, plumbing, and mechanical services.

19. Do you have a contractor for constructing/completing the project? What is the name of Contractor? If no, who will be overseeing the project from the community and who will be doing the work? MTSU Concrete & Construction Management Program will build the bench as a community service project and place at CMS. Professor Jon Huddleston is the MTSU contact.

GAUDI BENCH

OUR FINAL DESIGN



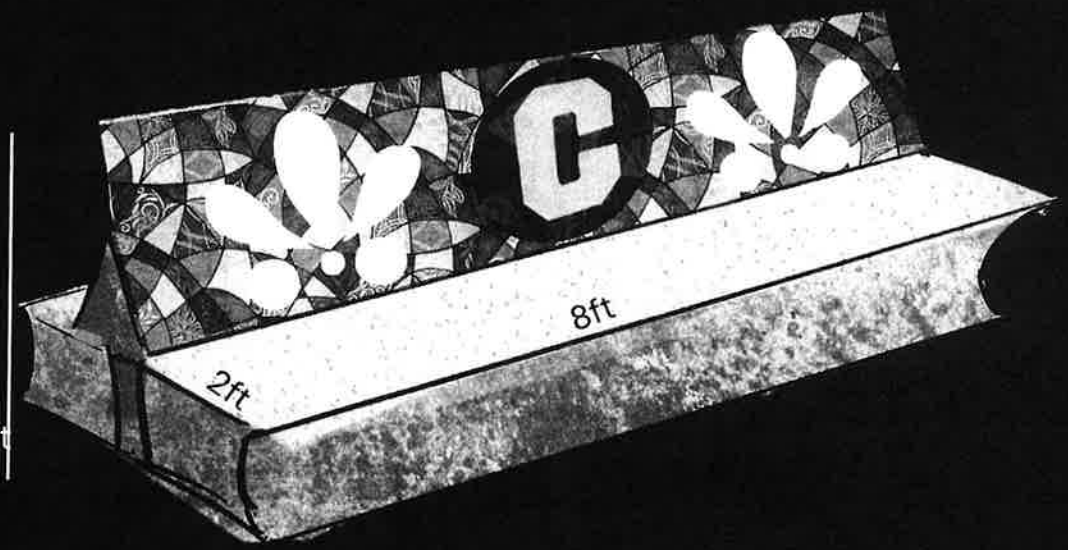
OUR FINAL DESIGN

- Central Magnet Tiger imagery
- Latin American animals and flora
  - Cosmos, Mexican Sunflower, White nun orchid, Cacti
- Royal blue stripe on top

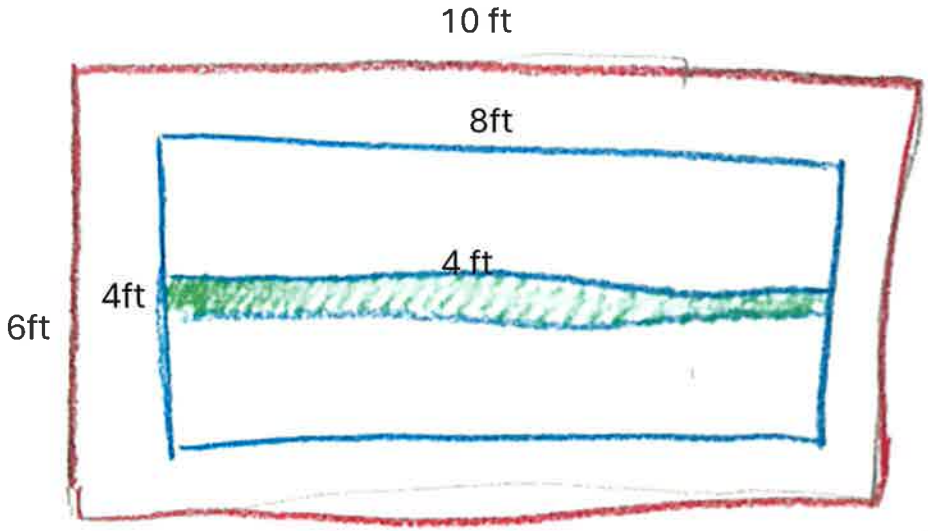
OUR FINAL DESIGN

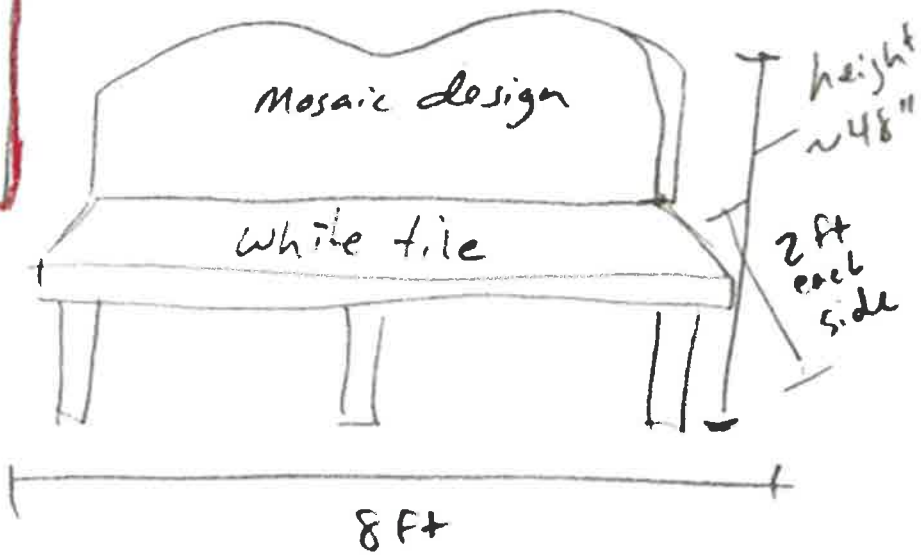
-More minimalistic, blue stained-glass background (varying shades)

- Varsity Central logo in the center
- Flower-like shapes on the sides.



- Pad (10'x6')
- Bench (8'x4')
- [illegible] (~48")





various shades of green
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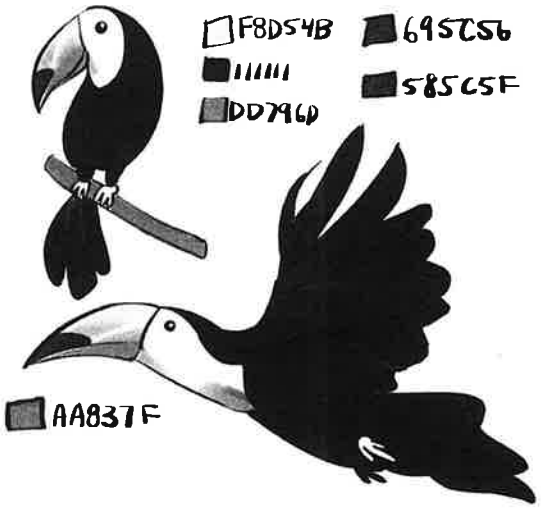
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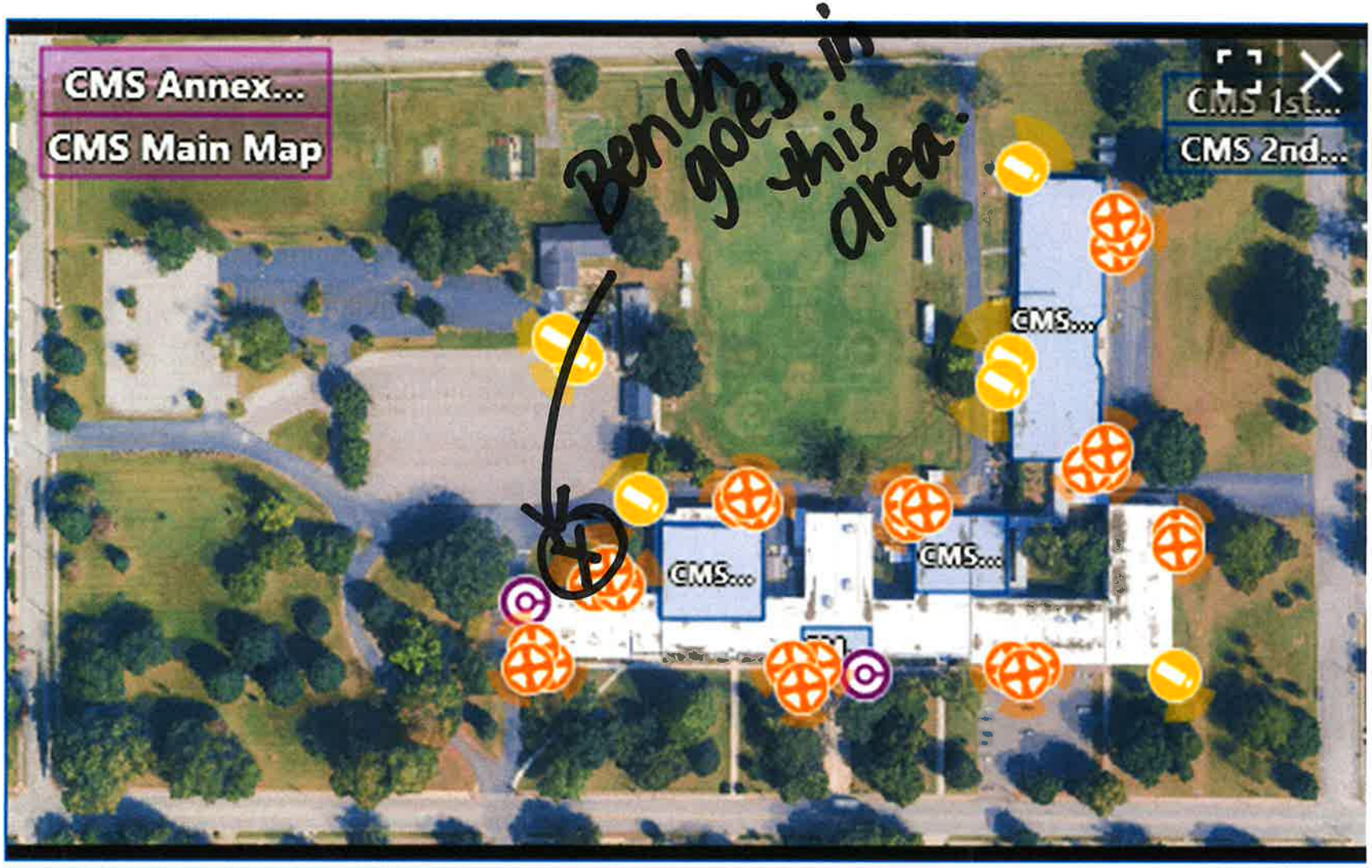
[redacted] 275C30

THANK YOU!


CMS Annex...
CMS Main Map
Bench goes in this area
CMS 1st...
CMS 2nd...
CMS...
CMS...
CMS...

EPC

Elevate Play Collective
1784 W Northfield Blvd #313
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
615-956-3831
info@elevateplaycollective.com

Customer Information
Rocky Fork Elementary
200 Thunderstorm Lane
Smyrna, TN 37167

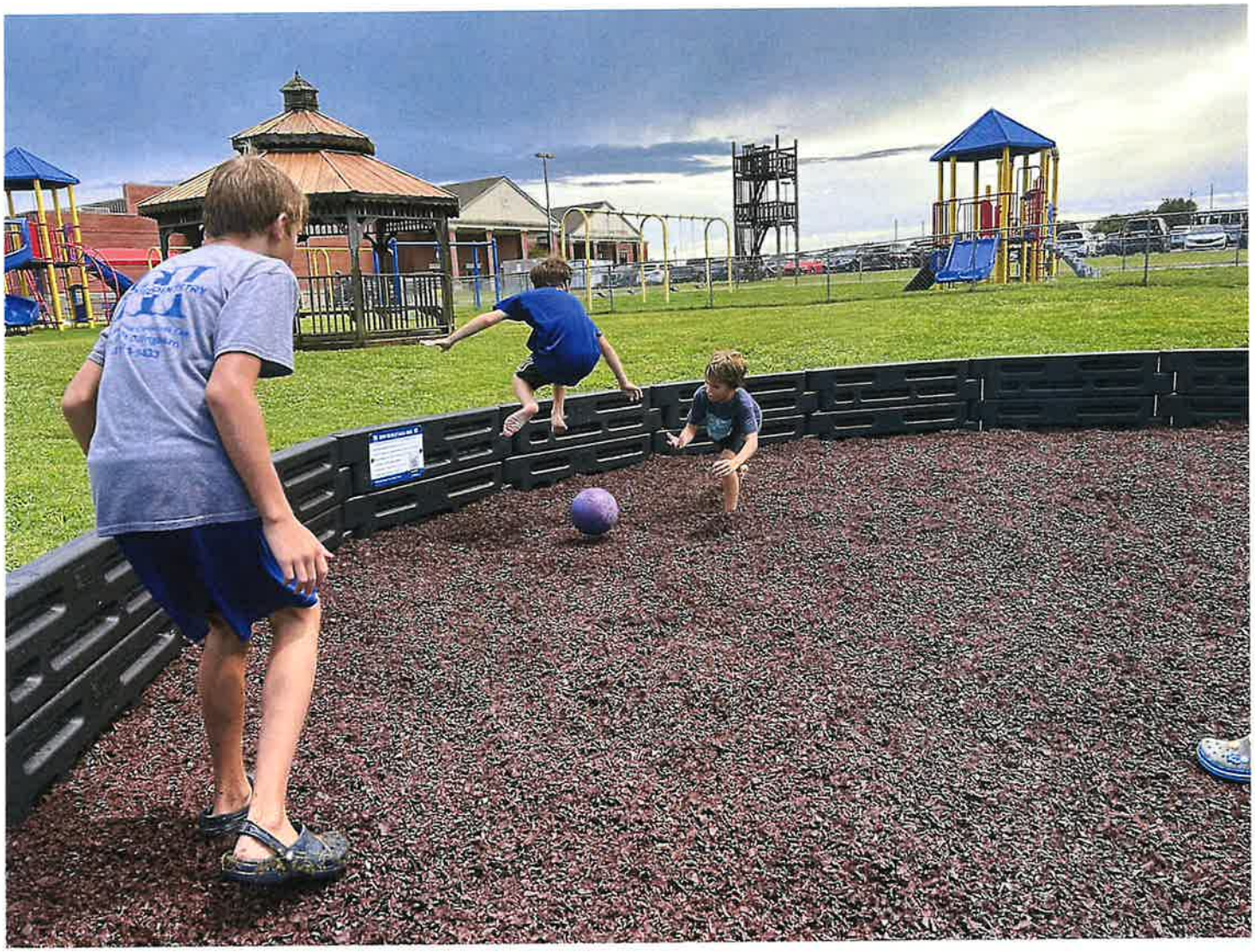
Quote Number: 1025-71
Date: 10-21-2025
Project Name: GaGa Ball Pit
Project Location: Eagleville School

Ship To	Terms	Quote Number & Name	Expiration Date
Smyrna, TN	50% Down / Net 30	1025-71 - GaGa Ball Pit w/ Rubber Mulch	30 Days

Quantity	Part Number	Description	Unit Price	Amount
2	GaGa26	26' GaGa Ball Pit w/ Steel Anchor Spikes	$1,715.00	$3,430.00
1020	GEO-6100	Geotextile Weed Barrier Non-Woven Fabric, Pins and Non-Toxic, Organic Weed Killer	$0.85	$867.00
225	RBRMULCH-4	40lb Bag Rubber Mulch (100% Color) - 3" Total Depth	$12.15	$2,733.75
1	Install	Installation of Gaga Ball Pit, Geotextile Fabric, Weed Killer and Rubber Mulch	$1,235.00	$1,235.00
			Subtotal:	$8,265.75
			Freight:	$1,248.00
			Sales Tax:	Forward Cert.
			Total:	$9,513.75

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

PRICING: Due to volatile economic demand, pricing is valid for 45 days unless otherwise noted. Pricing is subject to change. Request updated pricing when purchasing from quotes more than 45 days old.
PAYMENT TERMS: Final invoice is net 30 unless otherwise agreed upon. Checks should be made payable to Elevate Play Collective, LLC unless otherwise directed.
FINANCE CHARGE: A 1.5% monthly finance charge (or as permitted by law) will be added to invoices over 30 days past due.
TAXES: Taxes will be be shown as a separate line item when included. Any applicable taxes not shown will be added to final invoice. A copy of your tax exemption certificate must be submitted at time of order or taxes will be added to your invoice.
SHIPMENT: Multiple shipments may be required based on point of origin. Above costs assume one shipment for each vendor quoted.
DELIVERY: It is the responsibility of the owner to offload and inventory equipment, unless other arrangements have been made. Missing or damaged equipment must be reported within 15 days of acceptance of delivery.
ORDERS: All orders shall be in writing by purchase order, signed quotation or similar documentation. A signed P.O. made out to Elevate Play Collective or this signed quotation is required for all orders unless otherwise noted.



Rocky Fork Elementary
200 Thunderstorm Lane
Smyrna, TN 37167
615-904-6785

Mr. Scott Bolden
PRINCIPAL
Mrs. Mindy Simpson
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

October 22nd, 2025

Dear. Mr. Lee,

I am requesting to install a Gaga Ball Pit on each playground here at Rocky Fork Elementary. This project will be at no cost to the school board. It will be fully funded by monies raised from our schoolwide fundraiser. This project is being added to our two playgrounds at the request of our 5th grade ambassadors to provide more activities to take part in during recess.

Sincerely,

Scott Bolden

Scott Bolden

Rutherford County Schools

Application for Campus Construction Project

Before any request for construction of proposed buildings will be forwarded to the Rutherford County School Board, the following form must be filled out in full and submitted to the Rutherford County Schools Engineering and Construction Department with a letter from the School Principal, a site plan, floor plan and elevations (if applicable), a full estimate, and schedule.

1. School Name RFE
2. Principal Scott Bolden
3. Project Name Gaga Ball Pits
4. ~~Assistant~~ Principal who is overseeing the project Scott Bolden
5. Does project support recreational sports, athletics or education? Recreational
6. Does this project meet all gender equity criteria? yes
7. What department is this project being constructed for? (I.E. Baseball, softball, band, FFA, etc.) Recess
8. What is the anticipated cost for this project (this should include all utility connection fees, building permits, inspection, and construction). Attach and submit a detailed estimate. 9,513.75
9. What is the funding source and are funds currently available: (Grant, Booster Club, etc.)List all sources. Fundraiser
10. If a grant or funded by a foundation/donor/ charitable organization, what is the foundations name?
    Do construction plans meet criteria for funding? N/A
11. If funded by a local financial institution, has the loan been approved and who is the guarantor for loan N/A
12. Do you have a site layout showing where this project will be constructed on campus? yes
13. Has RCS Engineering & Construction reviewed project location? Are there any conflicts in utilities or easements? No
14. Has MTEMC, CUD, MWSD or other local utilities been contacted for service connection if required? N/A
15. Are plans drawn and stamped by Architect/ Engineer? N/A

16. Have plans been submitted to Rutherford County Codes or Murfreesboro City Building Codes Offices for review and/or approval. (LaVergne City Codes, Smyrna City Codes, Murfreesboro City Codes) N/A

17. What is your time line for completion of project? When will it start and when will it be completed? Materials to be ordered in December & project to be installed January.

18. If stated that construction project is at no cost to school Board all cost should be included in project. This includes electrical, plumbing, and mechanical services. ✓

19. Do you have a contractor for constructing/completing the project? What is the name of Contractor? If no, who will be overseeing the project from the community and who will be doing the work? Elevate Play Collective
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M'boro, TN 37129