



UPDATED

Evaluation of the Request to Operate and Manage an Innovative School for the 2018-19 School Year

Process:

The applicant submitted its original application based on the comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) published by the Innovative School District and a review of publicly available information, such as articles and websites.

This evaluation process has included multiple phases that are reflected in this revised evaluation form. The process has included the following: a review of the applicant’s original application; an in-person capacity interview; a review of supplemental information submitted by the applicant following the release of this original evaluation; and participation in negotiations discussions.

Applicant Information	
Applicant Name	Achievement for All Children
Primary Contact	Anthony Helton
Executive Summary of Strengths	
<p>The applicant demonstrated a strong commitment to serving the students of Southside Ashpole Elementary School (Southside Ashpole) and increasing the academic outcomes for students within the community. The applicant provided clear academic goals: 1.5 years of growth on Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP), exceeding the district averages by year 2, and exceeding the State averages in year 3. Further, the applicant intends to implement a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) process to serve at-risk students.</p> <p>The instructional program as presented in the original application and the capacity interview was vague and lacked specificity beyond indicating that the school will implement Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, and the Core Virtues curricula. It was unclear how the instructional program would meet the needs of the students at Southside Ashpole and dramatically increase student achievement. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant further described its model, emphasizing the use of Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, and Core Virtues. The applicant noted that the school will teach the whole child and will meet every student’s needs, including basic needs to higher-order needs.</p> <p>Further, the originally submitted budget relied heavily on philanthropic funding for general operating procedures; it was unclear if the model would be financially viable in future years without these funds. The applicant also had limited funds budgeted for speech and exceptional children services. However, the revised budget submitted in the negotiations document has remedied these concerns.</p>	
Executive Summary of Concerns	
<p>Achievement for All Children (AAC) does not have a track record of operating schools; it is a new entity currently in its first year of a contract to support a struggling school. Further, AAC does not have a contractual relationship with TeamCFA – its proposed partner – as verified by the capacity interview. Given the absence of a contractual agreement outlining the specific proposed services AAC intends to contract from TeamCFA, it is challenging to assess the collective capacity of AAC and its proposed partner to accomplish the programmatic elements described in this application. However, in the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) depicting the relationship between TeamCFA and AAC. While the MOU appears to have met the spirit of §115C-</p>	

75.8, the applicant would need to complete a contracted document as part of the negotiations discussions to fully comply with eligibility requirements of the law.

In addition, the applicant did not meet the expectations set by the Innovative School District in the area of Special Programs and Students At Risk.

Section	Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Addressing the Needs of the Specific Innovative School	X		
Record of Results		X	
Mission & Vision		X	
Goals		X	
Instructional Program	X		
Special Programs and Students At Risk			X
Achieving Measurable Results		X	
School Culture		X	
Startup Planning		X	
Civil Liability and Insurance	X		
Resumes	X		

Addressing the Needs of the Specific Innovative School

Qualified education service providers should have a clear understanding of the unique needs of the school or schools they wish to serve. In addition, providers must clearly demonstrate an understanding of the school's comprehensive needs assessment.

The applicant:

- Describes its interest in the specific community.
- Explains how the model and its commitment to serve this population, including the grade levels, will meet the student and community needs and align with the mission of the ISD.
- Describes the specific ways the applicant will engage and transform the existing school culture as it prepares to open and during the first year of operation, as well as the plan for the school it wishes to serve.
- Describes the applicant's experiences with partnering with local school districts, and its plans for engaging and partnering with other schools and the local school district where the innovative school is located.
- Describes how the applicant intends to engage the local community and the strategies that will be used to engage partners to address academic and non-academic barriers to achievement.
- Explains how the organization will establish a school-community identity, while simultaneously respecting and reinforcing the building history, role in the community, and campus identity.
- Identifies organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school, along with a brief description of current and planned role and resources that have contributed to the school's development. Applicants new to North Carolina describe how previous work has prepared them to establish relationships and supports in this new community.

Summary of Strengths

- In the application, the applicant cited statistics regarding Robeson County and stated a desire to improve the education of scholars at Southside Ashpole. During the capacity interview, the applicant described its specific desire to work at Southside Ashpole and serve students of that community.
- In neither the original application nor the capacity interview was the applicant able to clearly present the school's model or how it would meet the needs of the students or the community beyond describing its curriculum resources. Additionally, the applicant did not describe how the model aligns with the mission of the Innovative School District (ISD). The described approach is utilized across the proposed partner's schools, TeamCFA, and was not specific to this community. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant further described its model, emphasizing the use of Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, and Core Virtues. The applicant noted that the school will teach the whole child and will meet every student's needs, including basic needs to higher-order needs.
- The applicant will utilize focus groups, forums, and events to identify strengths, resources, needs, and desires of the community; the applicant intends to utilize such data to find growth opportunities. During the capacity interview, the applicant described engaging local community leaders, such as the local sheriff and the Chancellor at UNC Pembroke, to determine needs and desires of the community.
- The applicant's proposed partner, TeamCFA, has partnered with local school districts for transportation and leases; the applicant intends to partner with Robeson County Schools for some services such as "maintenance, IT services, sports, and meals."
- The applicant intends to utilize news sources, the school website, social media, and meetings to engage the local community, as well as create a Parent Teacher Association to engage both parents and teachers in the mission of the school. However, the applicant did not indicate how these will

specifically address academic and non-academic barriers to achievement. In the application and during the capacity interview, the applicant described the wellness needs of the community, but did not discuss concrete plans regarding how the school will meet these needs. However, in the negotiations document, the applicant described how it will establish community relationships and develop programming opportunities with community entities that will be woven in the academic and social offerings of the school, such as inviting representatives from the Lumbee Nations to teach students. The applicant also described its intention to offer parents a 12-week *Getting Ahead* program to help "...positively shape their awareness and equip them to better lead their lives through rigorous work done in a safe environment." Further, the applicant described many of the non-academic barriers to achievement during the negotiations meeting and described plans, such as partnering with UNC Pembroke, to meet such needs.

- In the application, the applicant did not address how it will establish a school-community identity. In the negotiations document, however, the applicant noted that in order to form a school-community identity, it would conduct a thorough evaluation of the community strengths and challenges and develop programming opportunities woven into the school as a result of the evaluation. During the negotiations meeting, the applicant also stressed the importance of partnering with the local community to serve the needs of the school's students and families.
- The applicant acknowledges that Leaders Building Leaders (LBL) assisted with the development of the application and the program development. During the capacity interview, the applicant indicated that LBL will likely play a role in the school; however, the specifics and a contract are yet to be determined. In the negotiations document, the applicant submitted an MOU between LBL and AAC that specified LBL's proposed involvement in the school.

Summary of Concerns

- No specific concerns are noted at this time.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
X		

Record of Results

Applicants must have a record of results in improving performance of persistently low-performing schools or improving performance of a substantial number of underperforming students with a school or schools operated by the organization in this State or other States. The applicant may also have a credible and specific plan for dramatically improving student achievement in a low-performing school and provides evidence that the applicant, or a contractual affiliate of such an entity, is either currently operating a school or schools in this State that provide students a sound, basic education or demonstrating consistent and substantial growth toward providing a sound, basic education in the prior three school years.

The applicant:

- Describes its prior experience in assuming the operations of or turning around an underperforming school based on its record of results;
- Describes its results in serving students with similar demographics of the school(s) it is interested in serving.
- Includes, as Attachment 1, a table that lists the following:
 - Names of all schools currently being operated or operated within the past five years by the organization in this State or any other State, regardless of current operational status
 - The city and State the schools are located
 - The length of time involved in operations of the school(s) (e.g., 1 year, 2 years)
 - Basic demographic information for the school including race/ethnic diversity, poverty levels, special education, and English language learners
 - A summary of the academic outcomes/data showing the results achieved by the school(s) in the applicant's network or under the organization's operation for each year (up to the most recent five years) the school was operated by the organization to include data on
 - Academic growth in reading and mathematics
 - Grade-level proficiency in reading and mathematics
 - Attendance data
 - Discipline data
 - Third-party evaluations of the applicant's outcomes (optional)

Summary of Strengths

- No specific strengths are noted at this time.

Summary of Concerns

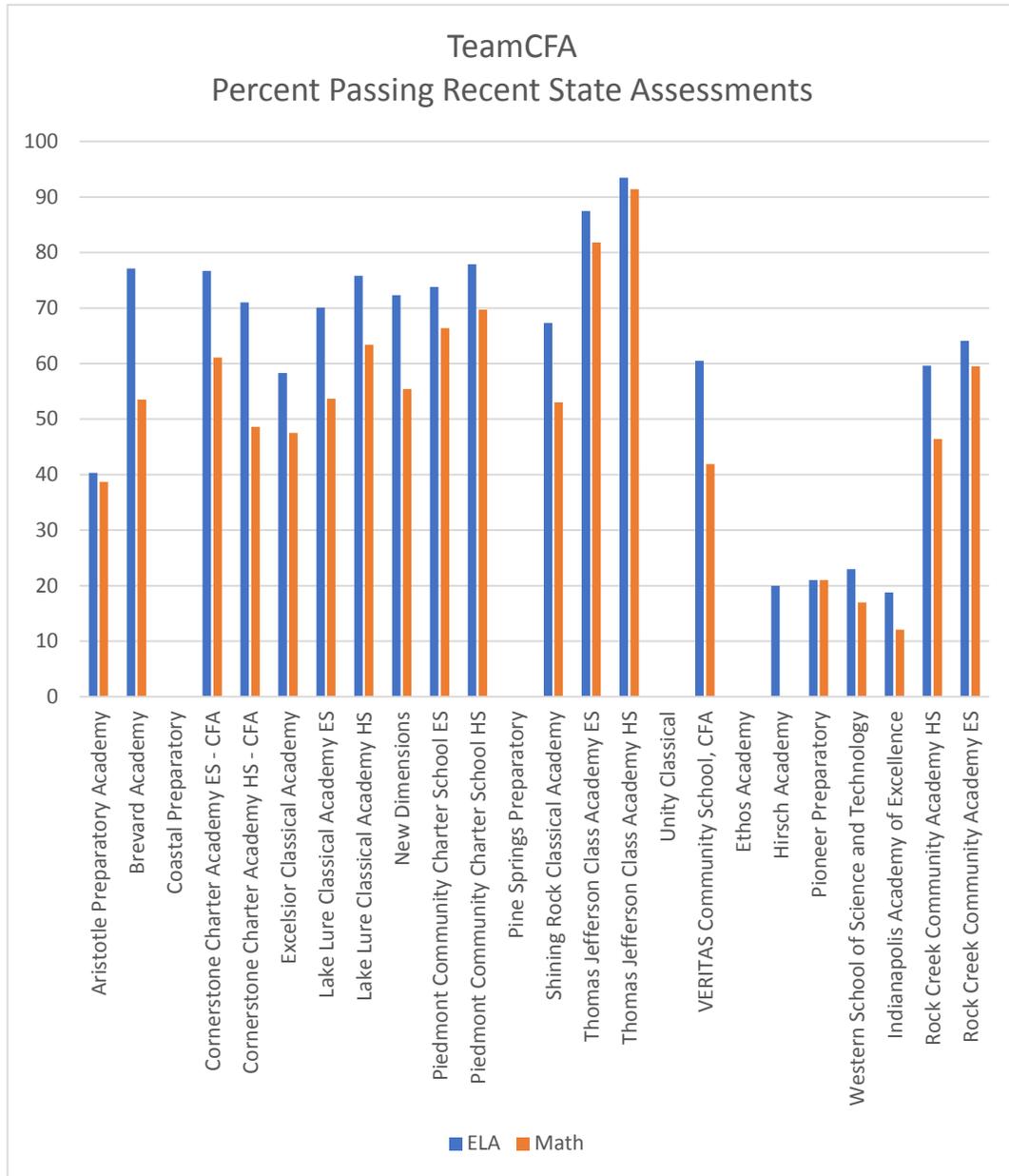
- It is unclear if AAC is legally eligible to operate and manage Southside Ashpole per § 115C-75.8. According to General Statute, the entity must have "...a record of results in improving performance of persistently low-performing schools or improving performance of a substantial number of persistently low-performing students within a school or schools operated by the entity in this State or other States," or "...a credible and specific plan for dramatically improving student achievement in a low-performing school and [provide] evidence that the entity, or a contractual affiliate of such an entity, is either currently operating a school or schools in this State that provide students a sound, basic education or demonstrating consistent and substantial growth toward providing students a sound, basic education in the prior three school years." According to the application, the applicant, AAC, is in its first year of its first contract with the Aristotle Board to turn around an underperforming school, which does not constitute "a record of results." Furthermore, during the capacity interview, the applicant indicated that it does not have a contractual relationship with its proposed partner, TeamCFA, which has been operating in North Carolina for the past three school years. Given the absence of a contractual agreement outlining the specific proposed services AAC intends to contract from TeamCFA, it is challenging to assess the collective capacity of AAC and its

proposed partner to accomplish the programmatic elements described in this application. However, in the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) depicting the relationship between TeamCFA and AAC. While the MOU appears to have met the spirit of §115C-75.8, the applicant would need to complete a contracted document as part of the negotiations discussions to fully comply with eligibility requirements of the law.

- A review of the applicant's proposed partner's schools indicates a mixed record of student achievement (see Table 1 below). The table provides the percentage of students at each school that passed the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics State assessment in the most recent year for which data are publicly available.¹ For example, Thomas Jefferson Elementary School and Thomas Jefferson High School were the only schools that had more than 75% of its students pass both the ELA and math assessments. Many schools, such as Hirsch Academy, Pioneer Preparatory, Western School of Science and Technology, and Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, had low passing rates, with less than 25% of students passing both the ELA and math assessments. During the negotiations meeting, when asked about TeamCFA's performance and why AAC expects greater academic achievement than what TeamCFA has achieved, the applicant explained that TeamCFA is a partner to the schools and does not manage or have direct oversight of the schools. As a result, TeamCFA is unable to hold its partner schools accountable for outcomes. AAC, on the other hand, would be a management company and would be able to hold the school and its partners (TeamCFA, LBL) accountable.
- The application included information regarding its proposed partner's experience; however, not all schools affiliated with TeamCFA (as indicated on the TeamCFA website) were reported in the applications. Some schools in North Carolina, Arizona, and Indiana were not identified in the AAC application.

¹ Data were not publicly available for all schools supported by AAC or TeamCFA, as represented by the absence of results for some schools listed in the chart.

Table 1



Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

Strategic Education Plan

Mission & Vision		
<p>The mission statement defines the organization’s purpose and primary objectives, describing why it exists. The mission statement provides the foundation for the entire proposal.</p> <p>The applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States the mission of the proposed ISD school in thirty-five words or less. • Clearly describes the mission of the proposed school and how that mission will inform the school’s daily activities and students’ classroom experience. 		
Summary of Strengths		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the application, the applicant stated the mission of the proposed school. During the capacity interview, the applicant indicated they utilized Southside Ashpole’s current mission with minor modifications. 		
Summary of Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In neither the application nor the capacity interview did the applicant describe how the mission will inform the school’s daily activities and students’ classroom experience other than stating that staff, students, and families will know it and hear it daily and, as well, it will be reinforced in the curriculum. Specifics as to how this would occur were not provided. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength. 		
Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

Goals

The application should demonstrate clear and specific goals for the first 5 years of operation outlining expectations for the proposed school’s academics, school climate, and operations. Applicants should clearly outline the process in which the organization will measure the successes and failures of the Innovative School.

The applicant:

- Provides specific and measurable goals for the proposed school for the 5 years of operation, outlining expectations for the proposed school's academics, school climate, and operations. Address how often, who, and when the information will be communicated to the ISD Superintendent and other stakeholders.
- Describes the mechanisms by which the fundamental features described in the previous question will dramatically influence student success. The applicant provides evidence from its experience and/or valid research.
- Describes how it will drive growth among students at all achievement levels, while also accelerating the achievement of those who are most behind.

Summary of Strengths

- In the application, the applicant indicated it will communicate to the ISD Superintendent and other stakeholders the school’s results after each major assessment, as well as at the end of the school year. The applicant does not indicate who specifically will communicate this information.
- Similarly, the applicant described the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process in the application. During the capacity interview, the applicant indicated that they will flood the reading and math blocks with specials teachers to provide more support in classrooms and will utilize NWEA data to identify students needing support. However, beyond that, little information was provided to describe how the applicant will drive growth among students at all achievement levels. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, the applicant described how it will drive growth among students at all achievement levels through its MTSS process, Compass Learning/Edgenuity, and technology, among others.
- Other than stating the school will utilize MTSS, the application did not describe how the fundamental features will dramatically influence student success. No evidence or research was provided to validate the effectiveness. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, the applicant described the school’s fundamental features – Core Knowledge (particularly, the K-3 years); Singapore Math; and Core Virtues – and presented some research that validated the effectiveness of its key features.

Summary of Concerns

- The applicant listed three academic goals: 1.5 years of growth on NWEA MAP, exceeding the district averages by year 2, and exceeding the State averages in year 3. In the application, the applicant did not list expectations for school climate and operations. When asked about climate and operations goals during the capacity interview, the applicant described being fully compliant with North Carolina laws and ensuring reporting for the State and ISD. However, no specific goals regarding school climate or operations (pertaining to financial sustainability or organizational development, for example) were stated. In the negotiations documents, the applicant presented both financial and organizational goals, but the applicant did not address culture goals.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

Instructional Program

The application articulates the educational plan that the applicant intends to implement and does so in a manner that indicates that the applicant is knowledgeable and competent to develop an educational plan that will succeed in not only producing excellent instructional practice but continual growth in student achievement. The education plans align with the mission of the innovative school and the philosophy regarding instructional practices under which the school will operate. The plan includes information on what curriculum and/or staff training will be implemented to accomplish this goal.

The applicant:

- Provides a detailed description of the overall education plan of the proposed innovative school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies, and explains how this instructional program and model meet the needs of the targeted student population.
- Describes the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure for each grade.
- Provides a synopsis of the planned curriculum in Attachment 2, including one sample curriculum outline (in graph form) in the attachment for one core subject (specific to the school's purpose) for each grade the school would serve.
- Identifies how this curriculum aligns with the proposed school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina state standards.
- Describes the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to master and explain why these strategies will result in increased academic achievement for the targeted student population.
- Describes how teachers and other team members will be trained and coached.
- Explains how the proposed instructional plan will ensure student readiness to transition from grade-to-grade and to the next grade span upon completion.
- Describes how the applicant will personalize learning for each student in the school.
- Describes the structure of the school day, week, and year, including the number of instructional minutes/hours in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The applicant notes the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times, and explains why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for the school model and for student learning. In addition, the applicant provides the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.

Summary of Strengths

- The applicant indicated the school will implement The Core Knowledge Sequence and Core Virtues (a character education program) and provided a high-level summary of assessments. In neither the application nor the capacity interview did the applicant describe its instructional methods (outside of referencing instructional approaches outlined by Marzano and Danielson), or indicate how the instructional program and model will meet the needs of the targeted student population. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant described its instructional model with greater clarity, which includes the implementation of Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, and Core Virtues. Additionally, the applicant's original budget relied heavily on philanthropic funds. In the event such funds are unavailable (either in the first year or in subsequent years), it was unclear if AAC would be able to implement its instructional program, including staffing of key individuals to implement the school's proposed program. In the revised budget submitted as part of the negotiations documents, the applicant removed reliance on philanthropic funds to ensure fiscal viability.

- The applicant intends to have a student-to-teacher ratio of 20:1, with teachers offering classroom-based instruction.
- The applicant provided information pertaining to Singapore Math Curriculum for grades K-5 in Attachment 2, as well as a brief description of Core Knowledge and Singapore Math in the application and noted that the curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). However, the applicant provided very little information pertaining to how the curriculum aligns to the targeted student population. However, in the negotiations documents and the negotiations meeting, the applicant described how the curriculum will meet the needs of the targeted student population.
- In the application, the applicant provided a very high-level description of how teacher and team members will be trained and coached, but the application lacked details regarding the frequency and structures that will be put in place to ensure that such training and coaching occurs. During the capacity interview, the applicant indicated that the school will implement TeamCFA's current instructional observation model, which includes checklists modeled after successful rubrics, such as Marzano and Danielson. The applicant also reported it intends to hire an instructional coach to oversee this work. However, the applicant did not provide specifics as to how the instructional observation model would be implemented day-to-day. In the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted an instructional coach schedule that depicted the instructional coach's responsibilities for each day of the week and further described how teachers would be observed and developed. The applicant also provided a proposed professional development (PD) schedule. Also, given that a scope of work between TeamCFA and AAC has not been discussed or agreed upon at the time of the original submission, it was unclear whether the services offered by TeamCFA would include these supports or resources. In the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted an MOU with TeamCFA, which noted supports TeamCFA will provide to AAC, including supporting the instructional coach and school director. Finally, the applicant's budget did not allocate any funds for professional development of the school's staff. In the revised budget submitted during negotiations, the applicant devoted funds to PD, and the applicant also noted, in the MOU, that TeamCFA would conduct professional development for the staff.
- The applicant will utilize NWEA MAP data to plan lessons for scholars based on their individual needs, but in neither the application nor the capacity interview did the applicant describe how this will happen and what it will look like in the day-to-day operation of the school. However, the applicant described how the school will utilize NWEA MAP and other assessments to drive instruction and meet the needs of students in the negotiations documents and in the negotiations meeting.
- In the application, the applicant did not indicate why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for the school model and for student learning. During the capacity interview, the applicant described utilizing specials teachers and instructional coaches to provide additional support to students during the ELA and math blocks. Beyond this, however, no information was provided to indicate how the model would be optimal for student learning. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant described why a longer school day would be optimal for student learning. The applicant indicated that the school day would allow them to implement the various curricula with fidelity, as well as provide an explicit focus on Core Virtues.
- The applicant indicated that the school will utilize a progress monitoring intervention system and a personalize education plan (PEP) to ensure student readiness. The description, however, lacked details regarding the systems or processes that will be established. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant provided additional detail regarding the PEP and the MTSS model the school will implement.

Summary of Concerns

- The applicant stated that teachers will integrate technology, utilize direct instruction, and teach with hands-on, real-life applications; however, this description is high-level and lacking in specificity. Further, the applicant did not state how these strategies will result in increased academic achievement. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
X		

Special Programs and Students At Risk

The education plan must include information on the plan for teaching students who are “At-Risk” of underachievement, students who are English learners and exceptional children (EC). Federal and State laws do not allow schools funded with public dollars to exclude anyone based upon exceptionalities.

The applicant:

- Explains the extent to which the organization has the capacity and experience working to achieve high academic outcomes for students with disabilities, including students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities and students protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- Describes the methods and support systems it will use to ensure students with disabilities receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and that the school will be in compliance with federal and state regulations.
- If the school operator, in consultation with the ISD Superintendent, wishes to enter into a Memoranda of Understanding for Alternate Arrangements with the local school district for services for children with disabilities, the application describes the plan for providing these services.
- Explains the extent to which the applicant has the capacity and experience working to achieve high academic outcomes of English learners.
- Explains the extent to which the applicant has the capacity and experience in working to ensure positive academic outcomes for students at-risk of underachievement.
- Explains how the applicant will ensure the social-emotional needs of students are met.
- Describes how the needs of students will be met through wrap-around services (e.g., mental health partnering agencies, student basic needs services).

Summary of Strengths

- In the original application, the applicant simply provided a table of its proposed partner’s (TeamCFA) Network Schools and their percentage of proficient students with disabilities. The applicant did not explain the extent to which AAC or its proposed partner, TeamCFA, has the capacity and experience working to achieve high academic outcomes for students with disabilities. A similar table was presented in the negotiations document. During the negotiations meeting, however, the applicant indicated that one of its partners, Leaders Building Leaders, has capacity and experience opening and running a charter school that implements a Student Services Plan similar to what will be implemented at Southside Ashpole.
- The applicant expects to serve approximately 12% of students with disabilities and intends to hire at least one Exceptional Children’s (EC) teacher who will be responsible for implementing individualized education plans (IEPs) and monitoring students’ progress. In the revised budget submitted in the negotiations document, the applicant increased the number of EC teachers to two. The school will follow all Federal and State laws and regulations related to the education of students with disabilities.

Summary of Concerns

- The applicant provided very little detail regarding either its proposed partner’s capacity and experience working to achieve high academic outcomes to English language learners. The applicant indicated TeamCFA has experience working with Pioneer Preparatory School in Phoenix, Arizona, but this information provided very little detail regarding the organization’s capacity or experience.
- The applicant cited AAC’s recent experience working with Aristotle and indicated the school has increased proficiency scores on the NWEA MAP. However, the applicant did not describe its

capacity to ensure positive academic outcomes for students at risk of underachievement beyond stating, "AAC has access to resources that will provide the necessary support to our teaching and administrative team..."

- The applicant indicated the school will have a Scholar Handbook that students will be expected to follow. The applicant also indicated the school will implement a character development program. No details, however, were provided that speak to how the school will ensure that the social-emotional needs of students are met. The applicant's response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength. Additionally, a review of AAC's submitted budget indicated that no funds were budgeted for psychology services. The revised budget submitted during the negotiations phase did include contracted support services, but it is unclear whether the allocation will be sufficient to meet the needs of the school's students, particularly given the challenges outlined by the applicant within its submitted materials.
- The applicant indicated it will have comprehensive wraparound plans for students having emotional or behavioral disabilities, but when asked during the capacity interview, the applicant was unable to present specific plans. The applicant's response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength. Further, a review of AAC's submitted budget also revealed that the applicant budgeted limited funds to speech and EC services in general. The revised budget submitted during the negotiations phase did include contracted support services, but it is unclear whether the allocation will be sufficient to meet the needs of the school's students, particularly given the challenges outlined by the applicant within its submitted materials.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
		X

Achieving Measurable Results

The responses in this section include clear and measurable educational goals and objectives that set high standards for student performance for each grade level. These goals should expound upon the overall academic goal in the Goals section of the application. The applicant provides evidence that the evaluation tool(s) or assessment(s) will result in assessment data that will drive instruction and improve the curriculum over time for the benefit of students. Finally, the section ends with a list of developed clear policies and standards for promotion from one grade level to the next along with exit standards for ALL students.

The applicant:

- Describes any mission-specific academic goals and targets that the school will have for the five-year contracted period, and states goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments the applicant plans to use and describes the process by which it will determine and set targets. (The innovative school will be required to participate in all State-mandated assessments.)
- Outlines the clearly measurable annual performance and growth goals that the school will set in order to meet or exceed state expectations for student academic growth. Also:
 - Describes the presumed baseline and explains how it was set.
 - Articulates how the applicant will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, sub-groups, and the entire school – throughout the school year, and at the end of each academic year.
- In addition to mandatory State testing, identifies the primary interim academic assessments the school will use to assess student-learning needs and ensure progress towards State proficiency targets and describe how they will be used.
 - Explains the use of any evaluation tool or assessment that the school will use in addition to any State- or Federally-mandated tests. Describes how this data will be used to drive instruction and improve the curriculum over time for the benefit of students.
 - Describes how the applicant will support teachers in developing embedded assessments and checks for understanding in order to ensure that instruction meets student needs.
 - Explains how the applicant will know that the proposed interim assessments are valid and reliable indicators of progress and explains how these interim assessments align with the school’s curriculum, performance goals for the school, and state standards.
 - Describes the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide and classroom levels and explains what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.
 - Articulates how interim assessments will be used to inform instruction, and how teachers and school leaders will be trained in their use.
 - Identifies specific interim performance goals and assessments that the applicant will use to confirm that the school is on-track to meet ambitious academic goals throughout the school’s first year with students.
- Describes the process for collecting and storing data, including the information system(s) used.

Summary of Strengths

- The applicant set goals utilizing NWEA, NC Ready Accountability Model, and end-of-grade (EOG) proficiency results. The applicant intends to increase the percentages of students at or above grade level on the NWEA for each of the five-year contracted period, which will move the school to 85% of all students at or above grade level in 2022-2023. These, however, are not mission-specific goals or targets and, instead, are the goals listed previously in the application.

- For the EOG proficiency goal, the applicant presented evidence and data describing how the baseline was set. The applicant also indicated that the baseline score for the NWEA goals was taken from the beginning of the year normative scores for 2015 published by NWEA. The applicant did not explain, however, why this baseline was appropriate for the school. In the negotiations document, the applicant explained why NWEA’s normative scores were an appropriate baseline for Southside Ashpole.
- The applicant indicated the school will administer NWEA MAP three times per year. No other information is included to describe how the organization will measure and evaluate academic progress throughout the school year and at the end of each academic year. Further, the applicant provided, in table form, projections for subgroups of students (i.e., female, male, American Indian, African American), but the applicant did not provide any other narrative to describe this. In the negotiations document, the applicant described how the school will utilize NWEA data and Core Knowledge assessments throughout the school year.
- The applicant indicated that the assessments will be aligned to the Core Knowledge curriculum, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), and Singapore Math. As such, the applicant stated they will be aligned to North Carolina State standards.
- The applicant described how teachers will utilize data from interim assessments and will implement developmental grouping across the grade level, small groups led by an educator, focused centers, and possible push in/pull out scenarios in response to the data.
- The applicant indicated it will follow Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act’s (FERPA’s) data handling best practices. The applicant also indicated it will use the State’s secure shell to collect and store accountability data and NWEA MAP’s online system to collect and store NWEA MAP data. The applicant did not state how it will store teacher-created assessments or what information system will be used to house such data. In the negotiations documents, the applicant indicated that all data will be housed in shared Google Drive files and folders.

Summary of Concerns

- The application indicated that the applicant will use NWEA MAP and Edgenuity (educational software directly linked to a student’s performance on the NWEA MAP Progress Assessment). During the capacity interview, the applicant referenced NWEA MAP and Compass Learning. The applicant indicated NWEA MAP data will be used to drive instruction using the Classroom Breakdown Grid and the Learning Continuum, but the applicant did not explain how this will happen. In neither the application nor the capacity interview did the applicant describe how it will improve curriculum over time. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.
- The applicant stated that teachers will be given professional development and common planning time to create common assessments and checks for understanding across grade levels. Beyond this, however, the applicant did not indicate how teachers will be supported in these endeavors other than indicating, during the capacity interview, that the school will employ an instructional coach. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.
- The applicant did not indicate how the school will know that the proposed interim assessments are valid and reliable indicators of progress. Additionally, the applicant did not indicate how the interim assessments align with the performance goals for the school. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.
- The applicant briefly described the MTSS process, including the three tiers of instruction. No other information was offered to present what the school will do if it falls short of student academic

achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide or classroom levels. Further, the applicant did not describe what will trigger corrective actions or who would be responsible for implementing them (beyond the MTSS process). The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.

- The applicant did not state how interim assessments will confirm the school is on track to meet the academic goals. Instead, the applicant restated its NWEA goals for 1.5 years growth of each year. The applicant’s response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

School Culture

The applicant:

- Describes the characteristic spirit of the proposed school and explains how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.
- During the startup phase, describes how it will integrate parent and community input into the plan for developing a positive school culture, and articulates specific initiatives and/or strategies it will implement to learn from and engage the neighborhood and community.
- Describes how it will develop and establish this culture for the various stakeholders, including students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school.
- Discusses its approach to reinforcing positive student behavior and ensuring that all students remain on track to achieve the academic and social objectives set out in the mission of your school.
- Describes its plans for the school to align staff and students around high expectations for student behavior.
- Explains how it will measure school culture and evaluate implementation of your culture plan, including how parent and student feedback will be incorporated in measuring the school's success in creating a positive culture.
- Describes the school's approach to help support all students' social and emotional needs, and details the identification strategy, interventions, and remediation to be implemented. The applicant cites the research/rationale for the selected methods, including how it will measure the success of its social and emotional remediation efforts and how it will communicate the need for remediation to parents and invest them in supports.
- Describes its goal for student attendance and explains how it will ensure high rates of student attendance as well as what supports will be in place to reduce truancy and chronic absenteeism.

Summary of Strengths

- The applicant cited its mission, vision, and statement of belief but did not state the characteristic spirit of the proposed school or explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development. In the negotiations documents and during the negotiations meeting, the applicant described how it will promote a positive environment while emphasizing the importance of building strong relationships with students and increasing understanding of students.
- The applicant intends to administer annual surveys and exit feedback forms, which will measure school culture and evaluate the success of the culture plan.
- The applicant stated, "A cohesive, positive school environment for all stakeholders is essential to student achievement and starts with the principal" (pg. 45), but the applicant did not indicate how the school will develop and establish culture for all stakeholders from the first day of the school. In the negotiations documents, the applicant described the importance of forming strong relationships with students and teaching students the social skills and behaviors needed for success. The applicant intends to have schoolwide non-negotiables for both instructional practices and expectations for behavior.
- The applicant will implement the Core Virtues program, which is designed to be used in conjunction with the Core Knowledge Sequence. The applicant also indicated the school will have a Scholar Handbook, which all staff, administrators, and students will be expected to follow. The application did not describe plans, beyond this, for how the school will align staff and students around high expectations. In the negotiations documents, the applicant describes its plans to

align staff and students around high expectations, including cultivating conversations around common areas of struggle, providing common planning times, and developing rigorous rubrics, among others.

- The applicant will utilize the MTSS process to identify students in need of social and emotional support. The applicant will utilize a 3-tiered approach to meet students' needs.

Summary of Concerns

- The applicant intends to invite community members to participate in focus groups, forums, and events to identify strengths, resources, needs, and desires of the community. However, the applicant did not describe, in either the application or the capacity interview, how the staff will reflect the community or how the applicant will address the minority/majority community that is referenced in the application. The applicant's response during the negotiations phase did not provide sufficient specificity to identify this as an area of strength.
- The applicant intends to utilize a Code of Conduct Contract with students and families, but beyond that, little information was provided that discussed the school's approach to reinforcing positive student behavior and ensuring that all students remain on track. While the applicant submitted handbooks from other TeamCFA schools during the negotiations phase, it is unclear how the practices for reinforcing positive student behavior outlined in the submitted handbooks apply to Southside Ashpole.
- The applicant listed some goals for student attendance (e.g., decreasing the number of students who miss five or more days of school), but the applicant did not cite an overall attendance goal. In the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted goals that included reducing the number of students arriving late, decreasing the number of students who miss 5 or 10 days, and increasing parental awareness. However, an overall attendance goal was not articulated.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

Operations Plan

Startup Planning		
<p>The school operator will be responsible for funding the startup period prior to July 1, 2018. The applicant must show that it will be able to support the opening of the school prior to State and local funds being available.</p> <p>The applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a detailed startup plan, as well as specific organizational goals for the planning year (SY 2017-2018) to ensure that the school is ready for a successful launch in Fall 2017. The applicant outlines key activities, responsible parties, and milestones submitted as Attachment 3. • Explains who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis immediately following assignment of a location to lead development of the school(s) and the plan to compensate these individuals. In addition, the applicant explains the ability of the organization to fund any additional expenses related to the opening of the school prior to availability of funds before July 2018. • The applicant lists any State Board of Education rules, regulations, policies, and procedures, or the provisions of the statute for innovative schools you potentially foresee submitting to the ISD Superintendent to request a waiver from the State Board of Education. 		
Summary of Strengths		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant indicated that AAC’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will lead the development of the school by hiring a full-time transition director to hold meetings and engage the local community. The CEO and transition director will be compensated from AAC’s current operating budget. In response to an email requesting clarifying and supplementary information, however, the applicant indicated that AAC will employ a CEO, instructional coach, and community liaison as opposed to a transition director. During the capacity interview, the applicant described the need to hire an instructional coach, as well as a community liaison. In the negotiations documents, the applicant clarified that the AAC CEO will serve as the transition director until the school director has been hired. The CEO will be compensated from AAC’s operating budget. The applicant also noted that the school will have a community liaison, whose salary will be paid by AAC; the instructional coach will be paid by out-of-the-school budget. 		
Summary of Concerns		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant provided a high-level startup plan that lacked detail regarding the various aspects of school startup. In the negotiations documents, the applicant described a plan for creating a start-up plan and then provided a start-up plan following the negotiations meeting. The start-up plan, however, was a list of activities by date and did not indicate responsible parties; the scope of activities is vast and would likely be challenging for the CEO to complete alone. Additionally, the applicant did not state specific organization goals for the planning year or responsible parties for each of the activities cited in the startup plan. In the negotiations documents, the applicant provided organizational goals focused on the following: efficiency; customer service; retention; clarity; and growth. 		
Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
	X	

Civil Liability and Insurance

The applicant provides a quote for insurance and:

- Has named the State Board of Education and the Innovative School District as an Additional Named Insured to their liability coverage for operation of an Innovative School while obtaining and maintaining insurance at a minimum in the following amounts:
 - Errors and Omissions: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
 - General Liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence;
 - Property Insurance: for owned building and contents, including boiler and machinery coverage, if owned;
 - Crime Coverage: no less than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to cover employee theft and dishonesty;
 - Automobile liability: one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence; and
 - Workers' compensation: as specified by Chapter 97 of General Statutes, Workers' Compensation Law.
- Has attached a copy of the quote with projected costs as Attachment 4.

Summary of Strengths

- The applicant attached a quote from Selective. Beyond crime coverage, the applicant appears to have a quote for the coverage articulated above.
- According to the table, the applicant has crime coverage at \$100,000 and not the required \$250,000. In the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted a new quote from Insurance People, which included the required \$250,000 for crime coverage.

Summary of Concerns

- No specific concerns are identified at this time.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
X		

Résumés

The scope of work to operate an innovative school requires a team of staff. School operators should have a team with the necessary personnel and expertise to manage and develop a plan for successfully operating a school. The applicant must provide information as to the qualifications and experience of key members of the organization.

In Attachment 5, the applicant provides résumés of all key stakeholders responsible for operating the innovative school either in the startup or operation phases.

Summary of Strengths

- The applicant provided résumés for its Board members, independent contractors through Leaders Building Leaders, and Anthony Helton, the CEO of AAC.
- While the applicant provided résumés in the application, it did not include all individuals who attended the capacity interview. More specifically, Tony Best, the Director of School Support for TeamCFA, was in attendance at the capacity interview, but was not included in the written application submission materials. Further, Tom Miller, from LBL, was in attendance, despite the lead applicant indicating that the two individuals' résumés from LBL were provided in the application due to their help writing the application but would not have a significant role in the startup or operations of the school. It is unclear what the level of involvement will be with TeamCFA, Tony Best, and LBL, given the absence of a contractual agreement between AAC and these organizations and individuals. In the negotiations documents, the applicant submitted a resume for Tony Best. Additionally, the applicant submitted MOUs for both TeamCFA and LBL.

Summary of Concerns

- No specific concerns are identified at this time.

Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
X		

Background Check: Notable Findings

Background checks and a due diligence review of individuals associated with this application did not reveal any concerns of a criminal nature.