Collegiate Academies

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Collegiate Academies

Absolute Priority 2: Low-Income Demographic

Collegiate Academies: High Quality Public Charter Schools for All

Collegiate Academies (CA) is requesting $4.73 million in CSP funding to grow our high performing network of public charter schools. **Under Absolute Priority 2, we will expand our model to include middle school seats, additional high school seats, and new concurrent enrollment seats for students from low-income families in Louisiana.** Louisiana is among the most impoverished states in the country, and within the attendance boundaries of our operating cities, East Baton Rouge Parish and Orleans Parish, the population living below the poverty level is 18.9% and 26.1%, respectively[1] (as compared with 12.3% nationwide).[2] Across our five existing schools (Appendix F), **94.5% of CA students come from low-income families, a higher rate than area public schools in New Orleans (83%) and Baton Rouge (76%)**; for detailed information about our student population, see page 17.

School Name	Location	# Low-Income	% Low-Income
Abramson Sci Academy	5552 Read Boulevard New Orleans, LA	590	99%
G. W. Carver High School	3059 Higgins Blvd New Orleans, LA	759	92%
Livingston Collegiate Academy	7301 Dwyer Rd New Orleans, LA	476	99%
Collegiate Baton Rouge	6180 Winbourne Ave Baton Rouge, LA	238	87%
Rosenwald Collegiate Academy	3819 Herschel St New Orleans, LA [temp.]	145	90%
Opportunities Academy	2625 Thalia St New Orleans, LA 70113	40	93%
Collegiate Academies (Network)		**2,248**	**94.5%**

For details on sources, see Appendix E. CA has a proven track record of transforming the opportunities of students regardless of economic background, educational experience, or ability.

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2017.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). *Income and Poverty in the United States.*

CA's mission is to build world-class public schools that prepare all students for college success and lives of unlimited opportunity. Our approach is rooted in the belief that all people, including students and the adults who lead them, can grow, no matter how old they are or the economic circumstances they come from. We aim to develop and share this foundational growth mindset with schools across the country, with our results as proof that all students are capable of making academic gains previously thought by others to be all but impossible.

All Collegiate schools are open-enrollment and tuition-free; we accept all students and do whatever it takes to meet their needs. Recognizing that low-income students with disabilities are a particularly vulnerable and traditionally underserved population, we seek to generate additional evidence that open-enrollment charter schools can and should provide an exemplary education to all students, including those with disabilities or language acquisition needs. Our approach combines developmentally appropriate program placement, a high level of rigor in academic evaluation, and a results-based environment for all students. It is our privilege to ensure that every child is empowered with the tools and support they need to make unprecedented progress.

Collegiate Academies has emerged as a powerful example of what public schools can accomplish when a team of committed educators believe deeply in and work together toward the limitless potential of all students, without exception.

Competitive Preference Priority 3 - High School Students

Collegiate Academies Exists to Serve Educationally Disadvantaged High School Students

Collegiate Academies will expand high quality charter schools to serve high school students, including educationally disadvantaged students.

Since our founding in 2008, CA schools have served only high school students. From an initial founding class of 80 ninth graders, our network has grown to serve nearly 2,400 high school

students today. With the additional expected growth proposed in this project, we expect to serve a total of nearly 5,000 students by 2024 across New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Of the 1,550 additional seats proposed in this application, 950 are high school seats designed to meet the complex needs of low-income and otherwise educationally disadvantaged students; the students at the heart of our mission. Specifically, within our student body:

- Nearly 95% come from low-income families.
- 20% have a diagnosed disability, nearly double the rate of area schools and the state.
- More than 6% of our students are English Learners, again about double the percentage in area schools and more than three times the rate in Louisiana (2%).

As discussed in detail in Selection Criteria (A)(i), data from the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) clearly indicates that CA operates "high-quality charter schools": our academic growth, achievement on rigorous assessments, graduation rates, and college enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students all exceed the state average across multiple schools in the network. Additionally, our financial, operational, and student safety track record demonstrates a strong record of compliance and excellence that will continue in the proposed project.

CA prepares all students for enrollment in postsecondary education institutions.

As Collegiate Academies builds world-class public schools to prepare all students for college success and lives of unlimited opportunity, we have developed and refined a model for effective public high schools that prove that it's never too late for students—regardless of needs or incoming abilities—to prepare for college. Every aspect of our programming and supporting organizational infrastructure aligns on preparing students, including those with disabilities and English learners, to succeed in college and postsecondary institutions. Each of the Outputs

included in this project and described in the aligned Logic Model (pg. 46) drive toward the goal of postsecondary preparation for educationally disadvantaged students:

- **Complete build-out of CA high schools in New Orleans and Baton Rouge** — the additional seats created through this CSP grant will bring the full array of CA programming to a larger number of high school students. As detailed in Selection Criteria (B)(ii): Educational Program, our model includes AP courses (on average, 4-5 per fully built-out school); a robust college access support team (i.e., full-time college counselor that provides college match, admissions, and financial aid support); multiple state-approved JumpStart career pathways tied to high-wage, high-growth jobs in the New Orleans and Baton Rouge regions; a full-time ACT Prep teacher to prepare all students to take (and retake) the college admissions test. Selection Criteria (B)(ii) also outlines the renowned, comprehensive set of intervention and support programming offered by CA schools for students with disabilities, English Learners, and other educationally disadvantaged students. Additionally, every student's course load includes College Success Class (CSC), with a scope and sequence that progresses over the course of four years to build non-academic college-readiness skills, including: Study Skills; Organization and Personal Time Management; Diversity and Inclusiveness; College Applications; Financial Literacy; Career Readiness / Exploration; College Knowledge – Classrooms, Academics; College Knowledge; Campus Resources; Health in College – Mental, Physical, Sexual; and College Enrollment. Content for CSC is deeply influenced by experiences, pain points, and lessons learned by our alumni in college.
- **Expand the concurrent enrollment programming available at two established high schools** — As outlined in the NIA, dual or concurrent enrollment programming is a research-based strategy to better prepare educationally disadvantaged students for postsecondary

success. By providing the opportunity for students to accumulate credits while still receiving the array of academic and social supports at their high school. This project will support at least two (2) CA high schools to expand concurrent enrollment programs. A full discussion of this component of the proposed educational program in Selection Criteria (B)(ii), page 22.

- **Expand current high schools to serve middle school grades** — While CA schools already deploy a range of strategies to prepare students for postsecondary enrollment and success, we must do so in just four short years. The proposed expansion to middle school grades for at least two (2) of our existing high-quality charter high schools will ensure a more academically prepared rising cohort of 9th grade students to take advantage of college prep offerings during high school. Over the last ten years, the CA educational program and school model has adapted to meet the academic needs of all educationally disadvantaged students served in our schools. As the initial cohorts of CA middle school students enter high school after receiving stronger academic preparation, we will deepen our accelerated learning programs, expand access to concurrent enrollment, and create other pathways for college preparation with the support of a CA high school. Additionally, middle schools will adopt all core elements of the Collegiate Academies Restorative Education program (CARE), an innovative restorative practices-based program designed to reduce the time students spend out of school for disciplinary reasons via restorative circles, strong mentorship programs to develop students' self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills, and an array of extracurricular activities to drive student engagement. A full discussion of this component of the proposed educational program in Selection Criteria (B)(ii), page 20.

In sum, this project's proposed activities complement a decade-long organizational focus on preparing educationally disadvantaged students for college enrollment, persistence, and success.

Collegiate Academies provides significant ongoing support to all graduates in persisting in postsecondary education institutions and attaining a degree.

Collegiate Academies' CA Next program (see pg. 40 for more details) provides all alumni with one-on-one advising and comprehensive guidance services as they work toward a degree. The CA Next team works continuously and collaboratively with college-readiness teams (e.g., College Counselor, 12th Grade Dean) at each school to develop, implement and evaluate strategies that best prepare students for the rigors of postsecondary life and that support them once they matriculate to college. Before graduation every alumnus is assigned an advisor who provides ongoing support, guidance and assistance with all aspects of life following high school graduation. Program components include alumni advising services, career readiness programs, college partnerships, financial literacy training, and peer mentorship. CA Next has earned recognition in local and national news outlets, celebrating the support structures currently helping alumni work their way through college.

Alumni from all CA expansion schools will benefit from this robust package of alumni services. In particular, CA graduates who earn their diploma and complete the proposed concurrent enrollment program will benefit from CA Next support and assistance as they articulate their credits to a postsecondary institution and work to attain their degree.

Collegiate Academies will leverage project-specific performance measures to track progress toward preparing all students for success in postsecondary education.

CA constantly uses data to drive the development and ongoing improvement of our programming and and educational model. The proposed expansion efforts will follow suit, particularly as we continue to develop and refine programming to prepare students for enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education institutions. Our complete five-year

benchmark plan for progress monitoring, which reflects each Performance Measure as aligned to the full objectives of the proposed project, can be found in the Evaluation Plan on page 47. To track progress toward our effectiveness in preparing educationally disadvantaged students for enrollment, persistence, and attainment of a college degree, CA's Performance Measures include the following leading indicators:

- ACT performance: To earn Louisiana's publicly-funded college scholarship (TOPS), students must earn at least a 20 on the ACT. Setting this as the target score for a Performance Measure will increase college access and affordability for our students, as well as indicating that students are hitting college-ready benchmarks in their subject tests.[3]
- GPA: CA aims for at least 65% of all students to achieve a 3.0 or higher grade point average. Research has shown that GPA can be a stronger indicator of success than test scores.[4]
- Attendance: CA aims to maintain a 95% daily attendance rate. Another early indicator of college success, high rates of attendance both maximize learning time in school and indicate executive functioning skills and habits that are critical to college success.[5]
- Number of participants in CA's new concurrent enrollment program: by the conclusion of the grant period, CA aims for enrollment of 200 total seats. These seats will provide new opportunities for students to accumulate college credit before graduation.

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[3] Allen, J. & Radunzel, J. (2017). *What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks?* ACT Research and Policy.

[4] National Association for College Admission Counseling. (2014). *Defining Promise: Optional Standardized Testing Policies In American College And University Admissions.*

[5] Neild, R., Balfanz, R. & Herzog, L. (2007). *An Early Warning System.* Educational Leadership, Volume 65(2), pp. 28-33.

- Academic credit accumulation: CA aims for at least 50% of each cohort to earn at least 24 credits in the first twelve months following their cohort's graduation date, inclusive of semesters spent concurrently enrolled in a CA high school and a postsecondary institution.
- FAFSA completion: CA aims for at least 90% of high school seniors to complete the FAFSA to establish eligibility for federal financial aid. Researchers have noted the correlation between completion of this critical financial aid paperwork and college enrollment rates.[6]
- Student debt rate: CA aims for concurrent enrollment students to owe $0 at program completion. High rates of debt upon degree attainment, particularly for students from low-income families, have a significant negative impact on life outcomes.[7]

In addition to regularly collecting, analyzing, and responding to these data internally, CA will provide performance data in all annual performance reports to the Department and to other external partners.

SELECTION CRITERIA

A. Collegiate Academies: A High-Quality CSP Applicant

Collegiate Academies was founded in 2008 on the belief that schools can help academically struggling high school students achieve unprecedented academic growth. We have oriented our organizational culture, strategy, and programming to make that belief a reality for thousands of educationally disadvantaged students in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The strength of our results compared to public schools serving similar populations in Louisiana indicate a strong likelihood that students in Collegiate Academies Expansion seats will meet challenging state academic standards, graduate from high school, and successfully persist in college.

[6] Reeves, R. & Guyot, K. (2018). *FAFSA completion rates matter.* The Brookings Institute.

[7] MarksJarvis, G. (Sept. 2018). Low-income students can fall into 'bad hole' with loans. *Reuters.*

(A)(i) Collegiate Academies has achieved academic results for educationally disadvantaged students that consistently exceed those of other Louisiana public schools.

Collegiate Academies outperforms other Louisiana public schools according to the state's rigorous accountability measure for student subgroups.

Since 1998, Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) has issued each school a School Performance Score (SPS) and associated letter grade. For high schools, the SPS combines student academic growth and absolute performance on state assessments and ACT (50%) and cohort graduation rate (50%). In 2018, for the first time, the state also published the SPS for multiple groups of educationally disadvantaged students within every school, alongside a statewide comparison. **In 10 of 11 cases, CA schools outperformed the statewide SPS for various groups of educationally disadvantaged students:**

- Economically Disadvantaged: 3 of 4 CA schools performed higher than average, ranging from the 46th to 76th percentile among all Louisiana public schools.
- Students with Disabilities: 3 of 3 CA schools were higher than average, ranging from the 76th to 94th percentile. (One school did not have sufficient data for a comparison.)
- African American Students: 4 of 4 CA schools were higher than average, ranging from the 58th to 84th percentile.

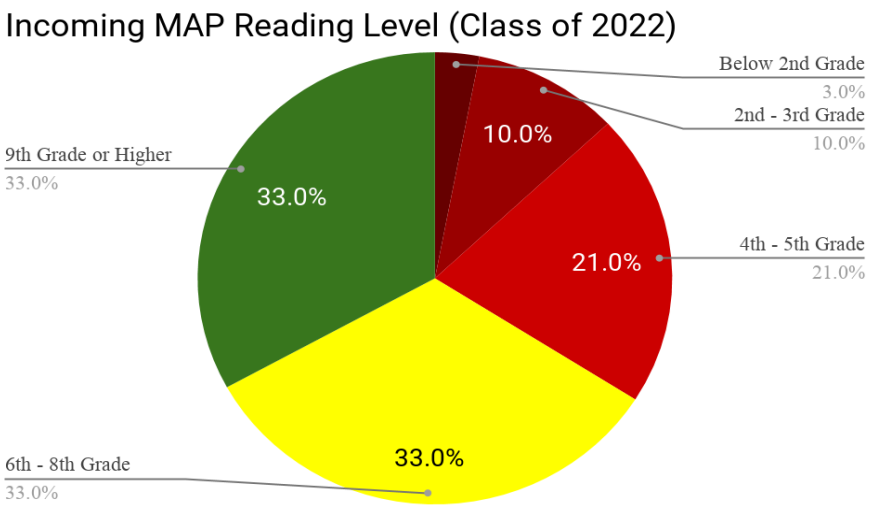
Full 2017-18 data is available in Appendix G. This analysis from LDE confirms that CA consistently exceeds the average academic achievement for educationally disadvantaged students in Louisiana across indicators outlined in the CSP statute and NFP.

On rigorous measures of student academic growth, Collegiate Academies students make significantly more progress than similar peers in other Louisiana public schools.

In every comparison available from LDE in 2017-18, CA has a higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students achieving the state's "Top Growth" designation. In its first year (2017-18), Collegiate Baton Rouge had the highest percentage of educationally disadvantaged students designated as 'Top Growth" among all open-enrollment high schools in Baton Rouge (n=13). The difference between CA schools and the statewide figure runs as high as 35% (75%of G.W. Carver English learners were designated by the state as achieving "Top Growth" compared to their peers, compared to 40% of English Learners statewide). Appendix G includes the full set of comparisons between CA and Louisiana.

CA's performance on growth measures and mandated assessments reflects our unrelenting focus on providing an exceptional high school experience to all students, regardless of incoming academic performance. This growth is critical, given the educational disadvantages borne by our incoming 9th grade class each year. For example, our rising 9th graders in 2017-18:

- Attended more than forty (40) middle schools, with an average LDE School Performance Score of 59 of 150 ("D" letter grade).
- >55% scored "Unsatisfactory" or "Approaching Basic" on the Math or ELA standardized test in 8th grade, indicating significant academic weaknesses as they entered high school.
- On the nationally-normed NWEA MAP test given to all incoming 9th graders at the beginning of the year, only 33% were reading on grade-level, and 34% were reading at a 5th grade level or lower, and the remaining 33% were reading 1-3 grade levels behind.
- >95% were students of color and >90% were economically disadvantaged
- 20% had a diagnosed disability (IEP)
- 10% were two (2) or more years over age (i.e., 16 years or older in 9th grade)



Despite the fact that students come to CA high schools with these challenges, their academic growth reported by the Louisiana Department of Education shows that our academic model accelerates their learning well beyond that of other public schools in Louisiana.

CREDO, the Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University, provides further rigorous evidence of strong academic growth via their quasi-experimental analysis of New Orleans charter school since 2010-11. Each student's academic improvement in Reading and Math is compared to that of "virtual twins": actual students in traditional public schools in Louisiana that share demographic similarities with our students. The measure that CREDO utilizes is "days of learning", with higher figures indicating stronger average academic growth across an entire school population. CREDO's 2015 analysis—the latest available due to changes in state laws around student data privacy—showed that CA scholars received 290 additional "days of learning" in Reading and Math. In other words, the virtual twins in other Louisiana public schools would need 470 school days in their school to demonstrate the level of academic growth our students demonstrate in a 180-day academic year. Quality instruction and strong school culture have helped Collegiate students make considerably more academic progress each year than their demographically-similar peers in other Louisiana high schools.

Collegiate Academies reports higher rates of graduation, completion of college coursework during high school, and college enrollment than other Louisiana schools.

The majority of cohort graduation rate comparisons between CA and Louisiana's statewide data show stronger performance by CA. Additionally, CA schools have a dramatically higher percentage of the cohort graduating with completed college coursework or having attained proficiency with an industry-valued skill set recognized by the Workforce Investment Council (WIC), indicating strong career-readiness. In short:

- *Graduation Rate:* 5 of 8 subgroup comparisons show higher graduation rates from CA, including significantly better rates for English Learners (State- 38%; CA- 56% to 80%).
- *Advanced College or Career Coursework:* 8 of 8 comparisons of educationally disadvantaged students show CA tops the state average. 5% - 53% more of the CA graduation cohort has accessed college coursework or career credentialing compared to similar peers statewide. These advanced academic experiences provide critical preparation for postsecondary education, which leads to higher persistence and completion rates than typically seen among educationally disadvantaged students.
- *College Enrollment:* 6 of 8 subgroup comparisons available from LDE show higher rates of postsecondary enrollment by CA alumni from the Class of 2017 than their peers across the state. (In the remaining two comparisons, the difference is within 1%.) Opportunities Academy, CA's college-like school for students with disabilities post-12th grade, provides a vital access point that differentiates CA from other Louisiana public schools. Additionally, our strong college counseling program helped the Class of 2017 (>90% economically disadvantaged students) earn a total of $9.3M in college scholarships.

Currently, three CA high schools are adding a grade annually and have not yet reached full Gr. 9-12 scale. Based on the strength of their student academic growth data, we anticipate maintaining performance on graduation measures and college enrollment measures that exceeds the state average as CA increases in scale.

Collegiate Academies schools achieves higher rates of attendance and retention than other Louisiana schools.

In nearly half of 2017-18 subgroup comparisons between Collegiate and the state, CA schools show fewer educationally disadvantaged students missing fifteen (15) or more days of school. While this comparison is less favorable than others noted above, the statewide data used as a comparison includes students in Gr. K-12; CA's data includes only high school students. As the US Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection[8] indicates, high school students of color are about twice as likely than other populations to struggle with chronic absenteeism. CA is tackling this challenge head-on: we have revamped our goal-setting, data tracking, and school-based teams to identify early students who are at risk of being chronically absent and intervene strategically. Proposed CSP activities will support this progress:

- Expansion to middle school will help students develop strong attendance habits before reaching high school, a key strategy identified in research by the University of Chicago Consortium for School Research[9].
- Expansion of concurrent enrollment seats will provide a clear pathway to postsecondary success for students, deepening their investment in earlier grades and driving higher attendance among educationally disadvantaged students.

[8] https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html#three

[9] http://bit.ly/2Cb5v88

(Note: Comparative data on retention/student stability of educationally disadvantaged students is not available from LDE. CA's data is reported in Appendix G.)

Collegiate Academies graduates are persisting in college at a higher rate than their peers.

Only about 1 in 10 economically disadvantaged students graduate from college by age 24.[10] Louisiana has among the lowest postsecondary attainment rates of any state.[11] CA's college persistence rate across its first six (6) graduating cohorts surpasses these figures by 3-5x. In total, 36% of alumni have either graduated from college or are still enrolled. (See Appendix G for a breakdown by graduation year cohort.) While encouraging, this data still reflects a significant gap between our goals and students' postsecondary success to date. The proposed expansion of concurrent enrollment at two CA high schools will address multiple pain points that our alumni experience as they try to beat the odds and persist in college: poor academic supports and guidance at local colleges, flexibility in course scheduling, and the need for debt-free options for low-income families. As outlined in our proposed Performance Measures, we forecast that our college completion rate will improve significantly as a result of this project.

(A)(ii) Collegiate Academies has never: closed a school; had a charter revoked due to noncompliance; had an affiliation revoked or otherwise voluntarily disaffiliated. And (A)(iii) Collegiate Academies has an exceptional track record of financial and operational compliance, indicating minimal risk of charter revocation or closure.

CA has built an effective set of management structures and practices to support the launch and expansion of high-quality charter schools that serve educationally disadvantaged students. All

[10] The Pell Institute. (2016) *Indicators of Higher Education Equity.*

[11] U.S. Census Bureau, 2017

third-party reviews of our schools indicate that strong operational and compliance systems are in place. Examples of these reviews include:

- CSP Monitoring Report by WestEd (Spring 2018): indicated no grant administration or implementation issues. WestEd spotlighted as "Promising Practices" our specialized programs for students with disabilities and our recruitment/onboarding processes for new members of our Board of Directors.
- Independent Financial Audit (annual): No weaknesses or findings noted and unmodified opinion on financial statements and federal program expenditures. (See Appendix H).
- LDE Fiscal Risk Assessment (annual): "No Corrective Action Necessary" indicated for all CA schools, based on indicators such as timely submittal of compliant budgets and reports, no audit findings, healthy fund balances, and qualified financial personnel.

Additionally, all CA schools whose charter contracts have expired were subsequently renewed by the authorizer (i.e., no CA charter has been revoked or terminated). Under LDE policy, schools may be penalized during the renewal process for financial or operational shortcomings, but the strong marks for CA schools in the Charter Performance Framework meant our schools received the maximum allowable terms.

CA schools have maintained an exceptional track record in the areas of financial management, operations, compliance, and student safety. Independent third parties have continued to attest to the network's strength in these domains, even as expansion has doubled total enrollment since 2015. The expansion of CA schools proposed in this project will benefit from these high-quality foundational systems and structures.

B. Collegiate Academies Significantly Impacts Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Within the wider education community, we have frequently encountered an arbitrary tension between driving toward a college-focused mission and serving ALL students, including those with disabilities or other additional learning needs. By leveraging fearless and aspirational problem-solving, we have been able to disrupt this thinking by creating innovative programming that redefines what it means to serve ALL students within a college-focused framework.

(B)(i) Collegiate Academies serves educationally disadvantaged students at higher rates.

Our mission charges us to create schools in which serving "all" truly includes all kids, no matter what. Yet, we know that there are a number of obstacles we must address. Since 1998, The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data has shown that only about a third of high school students are performing at a "proficient" level. Locally, we face the myriad obstacles that arise from the gross social and economic inequities shaping the daily lives and opportunities of those in our communities. These inequities are reflected in local and statewide data on income and life outcomes and have deeply impacted the educational experiences of our students.

In New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and the state of Louisiana, many families do not earn a living wage that will support access to necessary resources. As of 2016 in New Orleans, 63% of all people earning income earned less than $35,000 and 47% of African American households earned less than $23,237 annually, 37% of all children and 47% of African American children were living in poverty.[12] Overall, 26.1% of the Orleans Parish population lives in poverty. Data indicates that East Baton Rouge Parish fares similarly, with a median household income of $51,436 for all residents (well below the national median household income of $61,372) and a

[12] Plyer, A., & Gardere, L. (2018). *The New Orleans Prosperity Index: Tricentennial Edition.*

poverty rate of 18.9%.[13] Additionally, in East Baton Rouge Parish as of 2017, both the African American and childhood poverty rate is 27%, a data point which has remained consistent over the last decade.[14] New Orleans and Baton Rouge childhood poverty rates are higher than the national rate of 15.6%.[15] These economic factors contribute to social inequities facing minority and low-income residents in the state, including poor health and life outcomes: Louisiana has the highest homicide death rate in the country; the second highest incarceration rate;[16] and consistently ranks among the bottom of the 50 states for educational performance.[17]

Despite the significant challenges facing the most disadvantaged individuals in our state, CA believes all students can achieve academic and personal success. **Where many schools and education organizations may believe high school is too late to make a significant impact, we have built our organization around belief in the limitless potential of each student.** Regardless of prior academic preparation, ability status, or economic background, our schools embrace each student we serve and strive to provide the services and supports to foster individual growth. As of this school year, our student body represents the following demographic data:

Student Subgroup	Special Education	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	African American	Hispanic or Latino
% 18-19 Enrollment	20%	94.5%	6%	92%	5%

[13] U.S. Census Bureau, 2017.

[14] The Baton Rouge Area Foundation. (2018). Accessed from: http://www.brcitystats.org/

[15] The U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). *Supplemental Poverty Measure: Current Pop. Reports.*

[16] Wagner, P., & Sawyer, W. (2018). *States of Incarceration.* The Prison Policy Initiative.

[17] National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2017). *The Nation's Report Card: Louisiana.*

As addressed in Competitive Preference Priority 3, the rate of students with a diagnosed disabilities in our schools is nearly double that of the state, New Orleans public charter schools, and the East Baton Rouge Parish school system.[18] We also serve a higher percentage of English Language Learners than area schools and the state of Louisiana (2%). Though not noted in the table above, we also serve a number of students (10% of our student body) who are two (2) or more years over age for their grade (e.g., 16 years or older in 9th grade), as well as a number of students who have been involved in juvenile justice system.

As outlined in detail in Section (A)(i), our approach to meeting the learning needs of all students has led to powerful results that exceed those of other Louisiana public schools. These results include higher graduation rates, college enrollment rates, and student academic growth data across each of our schools and across student subgroups in comparison to local peer institutions. It is our hope that the programs, foundational mindsets, and holistic approach that CA has modeled, and will continue to develop, will set a new example for schools in our region and across the country. We hope that the achievements and growth that our students and schools have accomplished will reshape the narrative of what is possible for high schoolers, for students who are economically disadvantaged, for students with disabilities, for students who are English Language Learners, for students who are over-age for their grade, and for any student who has historically been underserved and overlooked.

(B)(ii) Collegiate Academies has a clear plan to ensure our schools will effectively recruit, enroll, and serve educationally disadvantaged students.

CA will use CSP funding to significantly expand our existing schools and model to create more high quality charter school seats that more comprehensively pave the way for educationally

[18] The Louisiana Department of Education. (2016). *Louisiana Special Education Data Profile.*

disadvantaged students to experience accelerated growth toward college readiness and rigorous post-secondary outcomes. Specifically, CA will: expand two CA high schools to grades 9-12; expand two CA high schools to middle school grades 5-8, developing and refining a middle school programming model that meets the educational needs of educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities and English learners; and expand two CA high schools to include additional seats that are specifically designed for students to enroll concurrently in the high school and a postsecondary institution.

In response to this selection criteria, we have detailed the most significant elements of our educational model, organized according to the following primary points of interest:

- Expansion Plan: Overview of three types of seats added to our schools to ensure more educationally disadvantaged students access high-quality charter schools (pg. 20), including specific project objectives for the five-year grant period (pg. 27);
- Educational Program: Overview of core elements of our model to achieve academic performance for educationally disadvantaged students that exceeds that of the rest of the state. Includes details on Culture of Growth (pg. 28); Data-Driven Instruction (pg. 30); Curriculum and Instruction (pg. 33); Intervention That Meets the Needs of All Educationally Disadvantaged Students (pg. 34); College-Readiness (pg. 39); Building Effective Teams (pg.40);
- Access and Community Support: Overview of CA's strategy to provide straightforward and equitable access to all students via student recruit and free transportation, while engaging proactively with the communities in which our schools operate (pg. 42).

Expansion Plan

Collegiate Academies will expand two CA high schools to serve middle school grades (5-8).

While New Orleans as a city has made tremendous strides in serving educationally disadvantaged students by creating high-quality charter schools, significant issues remain. As outlined in (A)(ii), more than 2 in 3 9th grade students entering CA high schools are reading below grade level, often falling multiple grade levels behind. Without these foundational literacy skills, a large majority also score below "Basic" on the Louisiana's LEAP assessments in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Students with disabilities, students of color, and English learners all achieve at lower rates than the city and state as a whole. After enrolling in a CA high school, Louisiana Department of Education data indicates that students experience powerful academic growth. Not all students, however, reach a true college-ready bar within four years of high school, leading to lower rates of college persistence and success than are possible.

As a component of the proposed CSP project, two CA high schools will expand to encompass middle school grades. Grant activities include two focused planning years to ensure that this expansion continues to provide the exceptional academic growth and joyful learning environment that families have come to expect from CA. Based on preliminary design efforts, the following core components to the CA model will be essential to replicate in lower grades:

- Culture of Growth: We will deliberately build a student and adult culture that celebrates growth and eradicates limitations on the possibilities available to all educationally disadvantaged students. We will select staff based on their alignment to this vision and will reinforce the belief in human growth through celebrations, coaching, peer feedback, and whole-school events. For a full discussion of CA's approach to growth mindset, pg. 28.
- Data-driven: We will build and use diagnostic and progress monitoring structures that are as rigorous and comprehensive as those in our high schools. We will use data to identify gaps in student learning and create action plans that guide instructional shifts and classroom time,

with a particular focus on educationally disadvantaged students. We will set ambitious goals for our middle schools that tie back to academic success in high school, college readiness, and college persistence. For a full discussion of CA's approach to using data, pg. 30.

- Tier 1 Curricula: We will select Tier 1 curricula for all core subjects, as designated by LDE's tiered rating system. We will identify strong professional development partners to support the implementation and high-quality delivery of curricula across grades and subjects. For a full discussion of CA's approach to high-quality curriculum, pg. 33.
- Hire and train great teachers: We will build middle schools that are exceptional places for educators to teach, valuing their expertise, building their leadership skills, developing deep relationships across students, families, and staff. We will provide regular in-depth coaching and professional development. We will compensate, celebrate, and affirm teachers to retain them year after year. For a full discussion of CA's vision for high-quality teaching, pg. 40.
- Deliberate intervention strategies for students with disabilities and English learners: We will continue to be a national leader in designing exceptional programming for students with disabilities and English learners. We will maintain high expectations while providing an array of high-quality individualized supports and opportunities to build student skill. We will ensure that our comprehensive curricula, programming and services reach all learners. For a full discussion of CA's approach to serving educationally disadvantaged students, pg. 34.
- CARE and Mental Health Services: We will expand the Collegiate Academies Restorative Education (CARE) program, an innovative restorative practices-based program designed to reduce the time students spend out of school for disciplinary reasons. We will utilize restorative circles, strong mentorship programs to develop students' self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills, and extracurricular activities to drive student engagement. For a

full discussion of CA's approach to student engagement, support, and culture, pg. 29.

We have the opportunity to create significant continuity between our existing high schools and their future middle school grades. We will invest deeply in the planning and execution to make this vision a reality and expect to prepare rising 9th grade cohorts with significantly stronger academic skills than current New Orleans middle schools. As outlined in our Performance Measures (pg. 47), this expansion will in turn drive higher academic achievement in high school, higher graduation rates, and higher rates of college enrollment and persistence.

Collegiate Academies will expand two CA high schools by adding concurrent enrollment seats. CA's current college matriculation and persistence data suggests that a portion of our students would benefit from a wider range of programming to prepare them for postsecondary success and completing their college degree. Specifically, more options are needed for students that initially enroll in a two-year option to pursue a degree or as an intermediary step towards enrolling in a four-year college for a variety of personal, financial, and academic reasons.

The local two-year option in New Orleans, Delgado Community College (DCC), has not proved adequate in supporting the success of this subset of students. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data from 2018 indicates that DCC produced poor graduation results, particularly for educationally disadvantaged student populations:

- DCC Overall 150% -time graduation rate: 5%
- DCC African American 150% -time graduation rate: 2%

While other two-year options outside of the city exist as alternatives, they also present obstacles for many students, as they frequently require access to off-campus housing, independent transportation, and additional financial burdens that are not fully covered by Pell grants. Students

either choose not to enroll, or enroll amidst challenging circumstances that further decrease the likelihood of student persistence and success toward earning their degree.

In response, CA seeks to expand our role in serving the demonstrated need of this subset of students by increasing total enrollment at two of our current CA high schools by building robust concurrent enrollment programming. The program would allow educationally disadvantaged 12th grade students to choose, after receiving robust college counseling about the range of available options, to delay their official graduation and remain enrolled at their high school while accumulating college credits via a concurrent enrollment pathway. Research indicates that by providing an array of academic and social supports, ongoing counseling, career exposure and internships, connection to outside social service agencies, and peer mentoring, we can anticipate that students participating in the CA concurrent enrollment program will earn more college credits than their peers in prior cohorts, thereby better positioning them to complete a postsecondary degree, increase lifetime earnings, and access better overall life outcomes.

Grant activities include a one-year pilot period to refine the model and map the full array of supports that students in concurrent enrollment program will receive in order to successfully complete college coursework. CA launched a "Postsecondary Design Committee" to finalize plans for a 2019 pilot and a full-scale launch in August 2020. Current planning activities include:

- Developing an internal cross-functional team to develop design principles, vet potential program models, and integrate feedback from a wide array of school-level, network-level, and external stakeholders. Design principles include: Debt-Free (educationally disadvantaged students should have opportunities to accumulate college credit without taking on debt); Fast as You Can, Slow as You Must (we have a preference for programs with a competency-based model to reduce the time needed for students to make progress on their degree while still in

high school, while also allowing students who need more support to do so without "falling behind"); Balance Support and Independence (the program should continue the CA strategy of moving students towards greater independence and agency as they progress through our schools, while still having a full array of supports to meet any student need that is holding them back from succeeding); All Means All (the program must be accessible and supportive of the success of all students, including English learners and students with disabilities); Leverage Strengths (the program should build on the successes and lessons learned from our CA Next Alumni Advising program, and from our successful launch of Opportunities Academy, CA's postsecondary program for students with disabilities, pg. 36).

- Engaging with external experts regarding program design, curricula and content delivery platforms (e.g., Southern New Hampshire University's College for All model); completing site visits to exemplar sites (e.g., Da Vinci; Peloton; IdeaU, Duet, Concourse Education, Braven, and MicroCollege/Honors Pathway sites).
- Creating a preliminary financial model, integrating variables such as staffing model, facilities access, transportation costs, and other key financial drivers. This includes clearly delineating the role of each school's existing Director of Finance and Operations to ensure strong operational systems allow teachers to focus on supporting students.
- Developing and executing a student and family engagement plan consisting of focus groups, surveys, and targeted alumni conversations to integrate student and family perspectives into the design of the concurrent enrollment program, as well as marketing, branding, and student recruitment efforts. Each school's Director of College Counseling is engaged in the committee and will continue to play an essential role in educating students about potential pathways and supporting them in whichever path they choose.

As indicated in the project budget, the network's Sr. Director of College Initiatives will lead the design and execution of a full project plan beginning in winter/spring 2019. By Fall 2019, we will have selected a curriculum and content delivery platform in order to pilot the program for up to 50 students (i.e., an expansion of the enrollment at two CA high schools by 25 students each). The Sr. Director of College Initiatives will consistently monitor the student progress and academic growth generated by this pilot, as well as collecting student and staff feedback, in anticipation of expanding enrollment to 200 total students based on completing critical milestones and reaching benchmarks on student academic growth and credit accumulation.

Students in the pilot and subsequent program will benefit from support from the CA Next team, as well as school-based staff operating the concurrent enrollment program. Each student's college counselor and CA Next advisor will provide hands-on support to ensure students are able to articulate their credits to a postsecondary institution, then continue to support them as they work to attain their degree. For details on the support provided by CA Next, page 40.

We believe that expanding concurrent enrollment seats will offer a necessary pathway to postsecondary success for students who have demonstrated a need for something more in our region. This program will provide a flexible, tailored opportunity for students to earn college credit, develop a more competitive academic profile to increase access to postsecondary institutions with higher graduation rates among educationally disadvantaged students, and be better prepared to pursue rigorous postsecondary pathways. By offering rigorous academic programming, personalized supports, flexible scheduling, and additional time for a subset of our students, we expect to see postsecondary persistence, satisfaction, and overall degree attainment to improve. Please refer to our proposed Performance Measures for specific targets for program participants and the overall impact on CA's college enrollment and persistence measures.

Collegiate Academies will expand two CA high schools to full Gr. 9-12 size. In addition to driving toward new and greater pursuits by expanding our schools to serve middle school grades and concurrent enrollment programming, CA seeks support to create additional seats in two CA high schools. CA will add three grade levels to a high school in New Orleans and two grade levels to a high school in Baton Rouge. The preliminary founding and build-out of those schools will be initiated with support from our existing CSP grant, which concludes in 2021.

The instructional model that has resulted in significant growth for students to date and proven CA as a high quality operator will also serve as the basis for these additional high school seats. The following sections describe this model in detail, including specific and comprehensive supports and services for educationally disadvantaged students. Our foundational mindsets, our use of data to drive student success, college-aligned programming, and innovative intervention offerings for students with disabilities and English Language Learners that are signature to CA will continue to define student experiences in high school.

Expansion Seats by School and Type (Middle School, High School, Concurrent Enrollment)

	2019-20	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
Previously planned expansion in existing schools	**9-12 2,750 seats**	**9-12 3,250 seats**	**9-12 3,700 seats**	**9-12 3,700 seats**	**9-12 3,700 seats**
NOLA 5 HS *Expansion*			+ Grade 10 150 seats	+ Grade 11 150 seats	+ Grade 12 150 seats
EBR 2 HS *Expansion*				+ Grade 10 150 seats	+ Grade 11 150 seats
GWC MS *Expansion*	*Planning*	*Planning*	+ Gr. 5,6 150 seats	+ Grade 7 75 seats	+Grade 8 75 seats
RCA MS *Expansion*		*Planning*	*Planning*	+ Gr. 5,6 150 seats	+ Grade 7 75 seats
ASA CE	Gr. 12	Gr. 12	100 total	100 total	100 total

Expansion	+ 25 seats	+ 75 seats	seats	seats	seats
LCA CE *Expansion*	Gr. 12 + 25 seats	Gr. 12 + 75 seats	100 total seats	100 total seats	100 total seats
Total CSP Expansion Seats (cumulative)	**50 seats**	**200 seats**	**500 seats**	**1,025 seats**	**1,475 seats**
TOTAL SEATS	**2,800**	**3,450**	**4,200**	**4,725**	**5,175**

Collegiate Academies' project objectives will ensure every student's needs are met. By expanding our high-performing model to serve more students, we will continue to close historic achievement gaps. CA's network office, the "Create and Support Team," will track goal-aligned performance measures over the five-year project period in pursuit of our project objectives:

1. Generate exceptional academic results for educationally disadvantaged students.
2. Increase access to and completion of rigorous postsecondary options for graduates of Collegiate Academies schools.
3. Increase Collegiate Academies' operational scope and educational offerings.

Please see pg. 47 or our Grants.gov Form for our aligned performance measures.

Educational Program: Collegiate Academies will effectively serve ALL students.

Regardless of a student's relative educational, economic, or social disadvantage, we create an individualized educational plan to prepare them for their most rigorous postsecondary outcomes. We actively work to support schoolwide structures that ensure maximum growth by targeting teacher training in skills, mindsets and essential knowledge by placing an emphasis on Response to Intervention and having an unwavering belief in what is possible, especially for students with disabilities or additional learning needs like English language acquisition; please see pages 34-39 in this section for more information on how we ensure the academic success of all students.

For each of the three types of expansion seats described above, CA will apply the

foundational elements of our educational program model, which aims for maximum social inclusion of all students and to provide a robust specialized programming that differentiates instruction according to individual need. We strive to give all of our students—and especially our students with disabilities or additional learning needs—an appropriate level of difficulty in tasks, or rigor. The right level of rigor in the classroom produces maximum learning and subsequently prepares students for maximum opportunity in their post-secondary education experiences and, later, in their adult lives.

Mindsets and building a culture of growth are central to CA's educational model. We believe that a growth mindset is critical to achieving all goals: a belief that growth and improvement is always possible for every child and adult in our buildings. We believe that intelligence can be developed through hard work and constant practice. We do not believe that intelligence is innate, but rather that the right setting and supports can lead to intellectual growth for all people. The research of Carol Dweck[19] is a guidepost for our work; therefore, all CA schools have programming that teaches and reinforces a growth mindset, which we model by approaching our work as adult learners. We only hire people who share this belief, and we provide many opportunities for skill development and the reinforcement of core values throughout the year. Our Vision of Teaching outlines the mindsets and beliefs that drive our work every day:

- *We teach the mind and the heart.* Great teaching goes beyond academics. As a team, we build a culture to become our best selves, students and teachers alike.
- *We eradicate limitations.* We approach our work with an "anything is possible" attitude. Whether a student has a lot of catching up to do, needs special supports that don't yet exist, or is only just learning to speak English: where others see obstacles, we see opportunity.

[19] Dweck's most prominent work is from 2012, *Mindset: How You Can Fulfill Your Potential*.

- *We challenge ourselves and each other.* Every day, we work to be better for our students. We engage in observations, coaching and feedback daily with accountability from peers and leaders.
- *We commit to expertise and leadership.* Regardless of titles, our teachers know they have the knowledge and expertise to make our schools better and they share it. At CA, everyone is a leader, and our teachers love this challenge.
- *We commit to longevity in our profession.* Our teachers are recognized and compensated for their work. Leaders work individually with teachers and staff to chart long term career paths.
- *We constantly work to be a great place for teachers.* The first charter network in a city of charter schools to ever make the list, Collegiate Academies was named the Best Place to Work in New Orleans by *New Orleans City Business* (2015); CA is committed and excited to build and keep the strongest team in the city.

In addition to supporting adult growth, we also build school cultures for middle school and high school students that facilitate rapid growth for students by:

- *Building a culture of high expectations and sweating the small stuff*. In practice, this culture manifests in: **extended academic time**—school day and school year—and **celebrations of growth**—recognizing positive behavior and reinforcing hard work and perseverance.
- *Leveraging relationships to remove barriers to learning*. Effective teaching requires a connection with students founded in mutual trust and respect. We build relationships with students and families through the following programs and structures: **Advisory:** Advisory is a space for students to express and address their needs and learn social skills necessary for college success. All students belong to an advisory group, including students with disabilities or other exceptionalities, to foster a culture of inclusion and acceptance. Advisory also allows

families to connect with a single staff member who will guide their student's education for all four years of high school. In addition to academic goal-setting, advisories work as a small group to focus on non-academic college readiness topics, such as Professionalism, Academic Self-Advocacy, Social Networking, Conflict Mediation, and Leadership. **Parent Groups and Events**: We maintain and develop relationships with families of our students through regular parent/staff meetings and frequent events throughout the school year. We are committed to providing parents with many tools, resources and opportunities to become more involved in their child's education, as well as creating opportunities for parents to provide input and participate in the ongoing development of our schools.

- *Expanding the Collegiate Academies Restorative Education Program (CARE):* CARE is a multifaceted, whole-school culture model that utilizes research-based restorative practices to improve school climate, reduce the use of exclusionary discipline, and achieve greater student outcomes. The model targets five key components: foundational mindsets, trusting relationships, student engagement in school, proactive restorative approaches, and reactive restorative approaches to improve student outcomes and reduce the time students spend out of school for disciplinary reasons. CARE focuses on non-traditional disciplinary methods such as restorative circles and strong peer and adult mentorships to develop students' self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills. Integral to CA's school culture and educational model, CARE has garnered attention from schools, educators and media outlets locally and nationally (see Appendix I.2 for a full report and I.10 for recognition for CARE).

Data guides every decision we make. Universal screening and frequent data analysis are used to ensure all students are placed in the most appropriate, rigorous setting to accelerate their academic growth. Data allows us to assess our progress in reaching goals, identify gaps in

student learning, and create action plans to guide our next steps. CA sets learning standards by establishing network-wide goals for academic success, college readiness, and college matriculation. We facilitate school collaboration to support the analysis of data and the sharing of best practices. Within each school, data guides the curricula in every classroom and the creation of individualized education plans for each student. Frequent assessment of instructional quality and student content mastery allows us to adjust curricula as needed to ensure we are meeting every child's needs. Current CA schools use the following methods to acquire student data regularly; comparable diagnostic and progress monitoring tools will be used with similar frequency and intentionality as our schools expand to serve middle school grade levels:

- **Reading and Math Diagnostic Tests** (NWEA MAP, Really Great Reading) determine student skills and functioning grade level—administered at the beginning, middle, and end of year. These diagnostics drive individualization of courses and interventions.
- **College Readiness Assessment** (ACT): All juniors take a year-long ACT prep course and practice tests, and 100% of seniors take the ACT.
- **Interim Assessments (IAs)**, aligned to Common Core State and/or ACT College Readiness Standards, IAs are administered every 6-10 weeks to track progress toward content mastery.
- **Exit tickets** are assessments of one or more objectives from a single class period. Teachers are expected to achieve between 80 and 100% mastery of objectives every day, even if they must use time outside of class to individually reach all students.

Failure of academic programming or school culture simply is not an option in any CA school; we focus on preventing struggles through highly focused and deliberate school-level evaluations. CA tracks and analyzes detailed metrics for school performance; constantly assesses the needs and successes of students and teachers; provides ample resources to address needs

immediately; supports strong management at each school; and creates and engages in robust professional development. **We monitor school health on the following schedule:**

- **Weekly Walk-Throughs:** The Chief Schools Officer (CSO) visits every school to observe school culture and monitor academic outputs. Depending on school leader needs, the CSO will provide up to three hours of hands-on coaching or professional development with the school leader. This might involve shadowing and real-time feedback, training on specific areas of need, or other intensive interventions according to the individual needs of the school leader. Concurrently, network content leads spend time with school-based academic leadership in classrooms and with teachers to support instructional improvement.
- **Monthly Planning**: In priority courses (Math and English), teachers convene to do unit and lesson preparation and engage with recent samples of student work, assessing it for evidence of learning, and creating informed action plans.
- **Interims (every 6 weeks):** School staff review comprehensive school-level data snapshots (interim exams, school culture audits). Teachers compare the performance of students with and without IEPs to ensure all students are progressing, adjusting instruction as needed. The CSO then works with school leaders to build action plans, targeting areas of greatest need.
- **Quarterly School Reviews:** A team of network staff partners with teachers and staff from CA schools to spend a full day observing each school in the network, evaluating classroom and whole-school culture and instructional practices. The evaluation team uses CA's comprehensive Culture and Teaching Rubrics (page 41, Appendix I.5, I.4) to draw key areas of improvement then supports instructional leaders in developing action plans.
- **Whole Network Data Days**: All CA staff gather for "Data Days" three times per year with their content-area colleagues across the network to review Interim Assessment scores,

disaggregate data, and identify strengths and weaknesses in their practices. All staff choose a year-long Professional Development Pathway course to engage in for the year, convening each data day, along with additional sessions of that drive performance.

- **Annual School Reviews:** We review yearly progress on a variety of indicators, including student achievement collectively and by subgroup, student retention, and teacher retention.

We continually strive for research-based strategies to improve our practice, and we rely on these deep data dives to support instructional improvements. By keeping a close pulse on progress monitoring, CA's network academic and leadership teams are able to act quickly if a school is showing signs of struggle. If a school does encounter a significant decline in performance, network resources will be immediately shifted to support targeted remediation efforts and capacity-building within the school, including strategies to sustain corrections.

Our mission of college success drives our academic curriculum and instructional model. All curricula and assessments are aligned to national and state standards; all coursework at CA schools is focused on college readiness. Our school standards demand that students are prepared for the state assessments they must complete in order to graduate high school and, moreover, that students master the academic, social, and emotional skills required to succeed in college. To ensure that curricula meets this expectation, CA uses a variety of highly rigorous standards and materials. Standards differ between subject areas, but include:

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English and Mathematics
- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
- ACT College Readiness and Advanced Placement standards, where appropriate

For all subject areas, we maintain a strong focus on literacy at every grade level. CA schools

have at least two blocks of literacy courses plus an independent reading block each grade in high school to accelerate academic progress and remediate skill gaps; we will replicate this norm for all proposed expansion seats, as appropriate. Providing multiple class periods for improvement of literacy skills has proven effective in quickly raising reading levels for students of any age.

CA provides highly differentiated interventions for any and all learning challenges. Students who are performing below grade level spend more time in core courses like reading and math; students who qualify for reading intervention take decoding, fluency, and comprehension coursework to quickly close reading gaps and students who qualify for math intervention take a pre-algebra booster course to ensure readiness for Algebra I. Mental health support is available and customized for all students. We maintain a robust continuum of support for students with disabilities and provide flexible supports for every student's unique needs. We achieve this by including all students in the college-prep culture and our commitment to inclusion benefits every student by providing consistently high expectations along with individualized supports.

Effectively serving educationally disadvantaged students: Collegiate Academies is leading the charge. As an innovative, reform-minded network of schools that serves students with disabilities and English learners at higher rates than area schools, CA has a responsibility to lead the charge in closing the achievement gap for students with additional learning needs as much as for those without. **Our work with students with disabilities draws in instructional experts and school leaders from across the country to observe how a public charter high school can truly serve all kids.**

At the beginning of each school year, we gather baseline data for all students on literacy and numeracy levels through NWEA MAP and Really Great Reading. Students whose scores significant deficits in content knowledge then engage in additional diagnostics to identify

specific learning or knowledge gaps. This data is used to indicate the need for students who may qualify for additional interventions, like the reading and math interventions mentioned above, or Special Education services. Individual student plans (IEPs) are created for students who are not on track and need further screenings or interventions in response to specific disabilities. CA ensures that all eligible children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education in accordance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Student IEPs include:

○ Research-based interventions for targeted academic skills.

○ A notification process for students and families regarding placement in intervention.

○ Appropriate progress monitoring instruments and the dates for further data collection.

○ A team that meets regularly to review data and update the plan to meet individual needs.

○ Speech Language Pathology services for students who need them.

○ Network- and school-level experts collaborate to design and deliver the range of services to build the student's verbal and literacy skills.

○ Thorough progress-monitoring and use of data to drive programming.

○ Collaboration and coordination with instructional staff, including Reading Intervention teachers and other content experts.

To meet the specific and varied needs of students with disabilities, CA has developed unique and comprehensive specialized programming. Our approach to serving students with disabilities has been recognized by the Louisiana Department of Education, which commissioned a full report on programming (Appendix I.3). The following programs are detailed in the report and provide additional individualized support for students:

● **Journey Program** is a full-day program for students who typically have Emotional Disturbance, a pattern of negative behaviors such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, or who have both a disability and are grappling with social and emotional issues. Journey combines a therapeutic milieu with a blended learning-based academic curriculum as students work toward their individualized graduation goals. They also receive daily support from the Director of Mental Health for therapeutic components of their plan, the Director of Intervention for academic components, a Behavioral Interventionist, and additional group therapy, social and emotional learning, and individual counseling. Students convene at the beginning and end of each day and are able to access additional support throughout the day.

● **Essential Skills** is a full-day program for students who typically have severe cognitive disabilities. Individualized instruction in this program focuses on developmental math and foundational reading skills, communication and language skills, and core transitional and life skills instruction according to student need. The goal is for students to be able to transition to supported living or supported employment and/or group homes after graduation.

● **REACH** is for students with less severe cognitive disabilities than those requiring placement in Essential Skills, but programming and supports are similar. Students in this program often participate in general education classes more frequently.

Once students who have more significant special education needs progress through 12th grade, they have access to **Opportunities Academy (OA)**, CA's signature "post-secondary" program for students with disabilities. OA is the fifth school in our network and offers students the opportunity to receive up to four additional years of tuition-free, individualized services in a college-like setting that spans the transition from high school to adulthood. OA is a one-of-a-kind, rigorous transition program providing students with intellectual and developmental

disabilities with the academic and vocational skills they will need to pursue their desired levels of independence and employment.

CA is also committed to serving **English Language Learners** (ELLs) at the highest level. Over time, the proportion of our students who are non-native English speakers has increased significantly. Our process for ensuring all ELL students are given the appropriate supports and services is currently in process within our high schools and will be replicated in middle schools.

- Every new student receives a translated orientation to help identify language-minority students. The Director of Intervention is notified when a child is identified and diagnostics are given for placement in general education courses and ELL support and course placement.
- All students are given a Home-Language Survey upon entrance to a CA school. If a child was indicated by the Home-Language Survey as coming from a home where English is not the first language, they are given the Language Acquisition Scales to determine the current level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending English.
- We create individualized Language Acquisition Plans (LAP) for all ELL students and provide comprehensive case management to monitor their progress, including follow-up testing throughout the year. Students testing with low English proficiency receive instruction in ESL courses and transition out as their proficiency improves.
- All critical documents are translated into students' home languages and all CA schools maintain contracts with a variety of translation services including document translation, phone translation, and in person translation. Translators are a part of major parent and family events on campus, including report card night.
- Staffing is tailored to meet the needs of each school's population. Each school employs an ELL chair, certified translators and ESL teachers. The number of teachers and translators and

their language expertise is dependent on the needs of the scholars.

In short, our comprehensive curricula, programming and services reach all learners; as CA embarks on the proposed expansion project, we will be able to further refine these programs to improve quality and academic and life outcomes for all students, including those with additional learning needs. While these programs for students with disabilities and English Language Learners currently serve high school students exclusively, they will provide a solid foundation on which our Special Education teams will build high quality programming for students with disabilities and English Language Learners in middle school grades.

Academic Interventions in Action. CA's strategic and individualized approach changes the trajectory of students' lives. We complete a detailed initial evaluation of each student when they enroll—whether in 9th grade or later in high school—followed by targeted instruction and interventions specific to academic, social-emotional, and other areas they have not mastered.

For example, Adrien, the oldest of four siblings, is on-track to graduate from G.W. Carver in May. While his middle school had attempted several reading interventions, he came to us in 9th grade with a 2nd grade reading level and significant deficits in math. Adrien received two years of intensive reading and math interventions, delivered by teachers with years of experience in working with educationally disadvantaged high school students. Each fall, he trained and played with the football team; each spring, he trained and marched in over a dozen Mardi Gras parades as part of the color guard. His IEP team used careful data analysis and goal-setting, deep partnership with his family, and a constant expression of belief in his capacity to grow to fuel his academic success. His GPA improved consistently since 9th grade, and Adrien was proud to make the Principal's Honor Roll in Fall 2018 by earning a 3.85 GPA.

Since his junior year, Adrien worked with a college counselor to build out his postsecondary plans and assist with the financial aid application process. An ACT prep course in Senior year helped him improve his Composite score five (5) points. In the spring before he graduates, Adrien will match with a CA Next Alumni Advisor, who will help ensure a smooth transition to college: assisting with final enrollment and financial aid steps, securing housing and course registration, mentoring Adrien on academic habits and practices to succeed academically.

In sum, CA has provided—and will provide—deep and effective supports to Adrien to help him succeed where his educationally disadvantaged peers in other schools might not. He brought real assets to the partnership, and CA helped turn those into an academic future that will give Adrien a life of unlimited opportunity.

Collegiate Academies is committed to cultivating college readiness. Coursework and programming is focused on developing non-cognitive skills for college readiness and persistence in postsecondary endeavors, as demonstrated by:

● **College Success Class (CSC):** Every senior's course load includes CSC, a 30-minute class taken four days each week. The scope and sequence of this course is developed and implemented by senior-level teachers, with guidance from the school's Director of College Counseling and the Sr. Dir. of College Success. Seniors receive an elective credit for this course, which serves as a platform for CA Next and our schools to actively teach non-academic college-readiness skills.

● **Seminar in Innovation and Change (SIC):** Every senior takes this course, which helps develop the skills and passion students need to take on some of the most significant and relevant real-world issues while preparing them for college-level work. SIC provides students with opportunities to practice creative problem solving, develop relationships with influential adults in our community, and investigate their role in the world of social innovation and problem-solving.

SIC concludes with a final Capstone Project that includes: a research paper; an oral presentation critiqued by external judges, often public figures and community leaders; and a relevant product, ranging from data analysis to hands-on volunteer work.

● **CA Next:** The CA Next team works collaboratively with college-readiness teams at each school to develop, implement and evaluate strategies that best prepare students for the rigors of postsecondary life and that support them once they graduate from high school. At that point, every alumnus is assigned an advisor who provides ongoing support, guidance and assistance with all aspects of life following high school graduation. Program components include alumni advising services, career readiness programs, college partnerships, financial literacy training, and peer mentorship. CA Next has earned recognition in local and national news outlets (Appendix I.10), celebrating the structures helping alumni work their way through college.

Collegiate Academies hires and develops best-in-class teachers, support staff, and leadership for all of our schools. At CA, our foundational beliefs about growth apply to everyone in our schools, including teachers, support staff, and all levels of leadership; our team is our greatest asset in growing students academically and otherwise. Ensuring we are building a team that shares an interest in rapid growth and continued improvement is the highest priority for quality expansion. Research supports this prioritization, indicating that teacher quality is the single strongest determinant of student success.[20] As we expand our schools to include additional high school, middle school, and concurrent enrollment seats, we will apply the existing practices and procedures that have enabled all students to thrive in our existing schools.

CA's centralized Talent Team leads all hiring efforts on behalf of our schools, including the

[20] Darling-Hammond, Linda. "Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence." *Education Policy Analysis Archives,* 2000.

development and expansion of partnerships, exploration of new human capital pipelines, and development of systems and structures that incentivize teachers to remain in the classroom and all employees to grow within the organization. The hiring process at CA is rigorous - from start to finish, it averages seven weeks - and requires multiple sample lessons or performance tasks, as well as discussions and interviews with current staff and students at the school. This intensive process ensures that every CA employee is prepared to hold and be held to the highest bar of excellence, directly contributing to our students' ever-increasing academic performance.

We maintain a model of ongoing staff development and frequent evaluation to ensure teacher quality is consistently excellent and improving. In partnership with Match Education, CA developed a comprehensive rubric and structure for training and supporting all staff. The CA Rubric for Excellent Teaching (CARET, Appendix I.4) presents clear guidelines for the types of instructional practices that we value and the language in which we discuss these goals with our teaching staff in the context of evaluations and coaching. The CA Culture Rubric guides teachers and schools in building supportive, productive learning environments (Appendix I.5). The following structures help to ensure teachers are exemplifying high quality instruction every day.

- **250+ hours of annual Professional Development:** Every teacher participates in four weeks of summer training, 3-4 hours of training each Friday, at least one weekend retreat per year, and 3 development days throughout the year. The majority of these opportunities are designed and led by our internal teams, reflecting our culture and beliefs. Teachers also have opportunities to participate in external development and collaborative groups.
- **Individualized Professional Development (PD) Plans:** Every teacher is observed at least once a week and meets with a coach either weekly or bi-weekly, depending on level and expertise. PD plans and coaching are individualized based on teacher needs. Every two

weeks, the teacher and coach use data and observations to create goals for increasing student achievement, assess progress toward these goals, and set new goals as necessary.

- **Ongoing Collaboration:** Academic departments meet on a regular basis to collaborate and vertically align across grade levels. Academic deans lead these meetings, based on schoolwide trends and teacher needs. Grade level teams also meet bi-weekly to determine cross-curricular strategies and expectations. The Special Education Coordinator provides all staff with guidance and strategies for differentiating content for all learners.

We believe that excellent teaching is a skill that can be taught and that frequent professional development and regular, in-person feedback are cornerstones of successful teaching. We ensure all schools have development and feedback structures in place by continuously training principals who are equipped to be both the instructional and cultural leaders of their schools and building their capacity to support and provide strong feedback to teachers. We assess the success of our hiring and staff development methods by analyzing student achievement outcomes; significant academic growth, as measured by state and national assessments at the end of each year, is the ultimate measure of team effectiveness.

Access and Community Support: Collegiate Academies will continue to prioritize recruitment and enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students.

At CA, student recruitment is a strategic, collaborative effort by school-based and network staff to maximize the number of rising 9th graders and their families who indicate their preference to enroll via citywide systems (EnrollNOLA/OneApp in New Orleans; Baton Rouge Achievement Zone). The recruitment strategies for new and existing schools are non-discriminatory: all students are encouraged to enroll and CA takes proactive steps to increase access (e.g., translated recruitment materials in Spanish and Vietnamese). In both New Orleans and Baton Rouge, we

take a grassroots approach: participating in school fairs, conducting visits to middle schools, bringing middle schools into our buildings for tours, participating in community events, and engaging in door-to-door canvassing to garner interest and enroll students. These strategies are designed to produce a student population that consists overwhelmingly of educationally disadvantaged students, and they have successfully done so to date. CA will continue to prioritize recruitment and enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students in all expansion schools supported through this project, including developing specific strategies to fill our middle school seats. Our comprehensive Student Recruitment Plan is outlined in Appendix I.6.

For New Orleans schools, all student enrollments are processed through the citywide OneApp/EnrollNOLA system; schools are not permitted to maintain waitlists or conduct lotteries separate from the centralized enrollment system to ensure fairness and equitable family access. In Baton Rouge, the Baton Rouge Achievement Zone collects applications centrally, but schools who receive more applications for admission than can be accommodated must be enrolled through a lottery that complies with all state and federal laws. CA's Enrollment Lottery Procedure is found in Appendix I.7. Consistent with our commitment to building great schools for educationally disadvantaged students, CA has in place an enrollment preference for students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and other students in categories listed in section 1115(c)(2) of the ESEA.

Collegiate Academies will continue to provide free transportation to all students. CA is committed to making our schools and programs available to all; since its inception, CA has provided full transportation services to all who attend our schools, free of cost. More than 95% of students currently utilize bus transportation provided by CA. The additional seats created as a result of this expansion project will also receive free transportation services. The costs to CA are

accounted for during the annual budgeting process each year, executed in partnership between school and network-based finance and operations teams. Each school's operations team works closely with families and bus companies to coordinate student pick up and drop off, routes, and opportunities for tiered busing with other CA schools for cost-savings. Through this partnership, per-student transportation costs have decreased by more than 10% since the 2015-16 school year, allowing for greater investment in the educational programming provided by CA schools.

Collegiate Academies will continue to develop and leverage strong ties to our communities. Meaningful community and family engagement is of the utmost importance for the success of our students; it is essential to partner with alumni, neighborhood leaders, and parent groups to guarantee that we are aligned in our efforts to transform student achievement. To ensure effective community engagement, we leverage our schools, board members, and network staff to reach targeted community members including, but not limited to, parents and families, local businesses, potential board members, state and local politicians, neighborhood community leaders, and donors. Our strategy is informed and supported by our governing board, key central office staff such as the Director of Community Affairs and Advocacy, and many local partners. Driven by the Community Engagement Training Program at Harvard University, CA is actively training parents in advocacy through our Parent Action Committees, Parent Alumni Associations and school Alumni Associations. Lastly, we have cultivated and secured the ongoing commitment and support of the following partners in each region. Please see Appendix C for descriptions of each partnership and a signed letter of support from each.

Organization	Contact
City of New Orleans	LaToya Cantrell, Mayor
Louisiana Dept. of Education	John White, Superintendent
Charter School Growth Fund	Kevin Hall, President and CEO

New Schools for New Orleans	Patrick Dobard, CEO
New Schools for Baton Rouge	Chris Meyer, President and CEO
Louisiana State Senate	Troy Carter, State Senator
U.S. Senate, Louisiana	Mary Landrieu, Former Senator
Parent of CA Student	Annie Brown
Baton Rouge Area Foundation	John Davies, President
Teach For America, Greater New Orleans	Joy Okoro, Executive Director
Living Faith Christian Center	Raymond Johnson, Pastor
Baton Rouge Area Chamber	Adam Knapp, President & CEO
Council for a Better Louisiana	Barry Erwin, President
Rosenthal Family Foundation	Stephen Rosenthal
YouthForce NOLA	Cate Swinburn, President
Cowen Institute	Amanda Hill, Executive Director

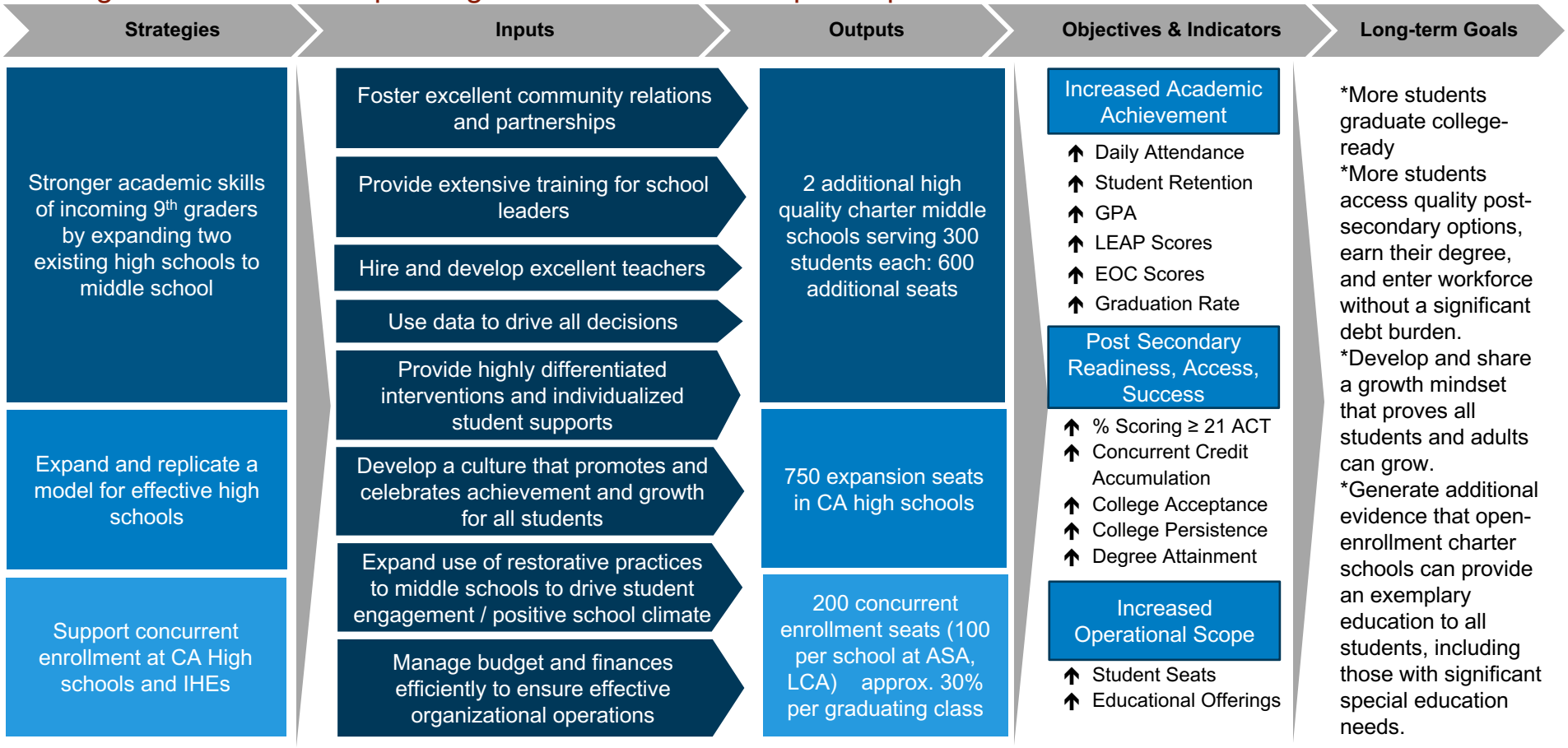
C. Quality of Evaluation Plan

Collegiate Academies has designed a rigorous independent evaluation plan that will not only assess outcomes related to its growth plan, but also how elements of the educational model contribute to its success and are maintained, enhanced, or even threatened as the organization grows. We anticipate adding important knowledge to the field by showing the success of the CA approach and how its components contribute to this success and, potentially, which elements explain variation in success across sites. This information will assist CA as it grows and provide insights for other charter schools, CMOs, and public schools interested in promising practices.

To assess CA's impact on student outcomes, the proposed evaluation includes a quasi-experimental design study that will meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards with reservations and will be complemented by qualitative and descriptive quantitative analyses. Both the evaluation and project design are driven by our **Logic Model**, which summarizes CA's plan for accomplishing the ambitious, achievable objectives detailed on p. 47.

Logic Model – Demonstrating a Rationale

Collegiate Academies: Expanding Services for All to Deepen Impact



CA Student Population (current & targeted): 99% identify as ethnic minorities; 92%are from low-income households; 20% receive special education services; 14% are over-age by 2 years or more; entering freshmen from local middle schools are reading at a 4.5 grade level.
Local Needs: Demonstrated need for middle school seats in New Orleans; <35% of N.O. and B.R students in gr. 5-8 are meeting challenging state standards.
College Completion Context in Louisiana: The avg. 6-yr grad rate for Afr. American students at 2- and 4-year colleges in LA is only 32%; N.O.'s community college has a grad rate of 2%; LA ranks 49th in the nation with 31.2% of residents aged 25-34 holding a degree from a 2- or 4-year college or university.

Collegiate Academies' objective performance measures align to project outcomes.

Objective Performance Measure	Baseline*	Target
PROJECT OBJECTIVE 1: Generate exceptional academic results for educationally disadvantaged students.		
% Avg. Daily Attendance	92.5	**95**
% Student Persistence (10/1 to 6/1)	93	**96**
% passing Middle School LEAP (scores of "Basic" or "Mastery" or "Advanced"; weighted avg. across all subjects)	n/a	**80**
% passing EOC Exams (scores of "Basic" or "Mastery" or "Advanced"; weighted avg. across all subjects)	51	**63**
% earning a 3.0 GPA or above	52	**65**
% Four-year High School Graduation	77	**85**
PROJECT OBJECTIVE 2: Increase access to and completion of rigorous postsecondary options for graduates of Collegiate Academies schools.		
Average ACT score	17	**20**
% of graduates who are accepted to college	98	**100**
% of graduates who matriculate to college	62	**85**
% of students attaining a college degree in 6 years	18	**60**
% of concurrent enrollment students accumulating > 24 credits	n/a	**50**
PROJECT OBJECTIVE 3: Increase Collegiate Academies' operational scope and educational offerings.		
Increase total enrollment in Collegiate Academies schools (by 2,775)	2,400	**5,175**
Increase program offerings to include 2 new seat types	1	**3**

As requested under 34 CFR 75.110(b) and (c):

- Accurate and appropriate performance measures: The proposed measures utilize audited, publicly-reported data to ensure a high degree of accuracy and reliability. Each performance

measure aligns to an objective that is critical for the project's success, and in combination provide for an appropriately comprehensive indication of overall project performance.

- Baseline data: All performance measures with a Baseline measure listed are based on data reported by the Louisiana Department of Education, with two exceptions: 1. % of graduates who are accepted to college (tracked internally based on student files maintained by each school's College Counselor and audited by the network's Sr. Director of College); 2. % of Students Attaining a College Degree in 6 Years is tracked internally based on data from the National Student Clearinghouse and alumni transcripts. Performance Measures without a baseline: 1. % passing Middle School LEAP (does not exist since CA does not serve middle school grades currently; will establish a baseline at the end of Year 3, the first year serving middle school grades); 2. % of concurrent enrollment students accumulating > 24 credits (does not exist since CA does not offer substantial dual enrollment programs currently; will establish a baseline at the end of Year 1, the first year of concurrent enrollment).
- Ambitious yet Achievable: All performance targets will be met by the end of the project period, with interim benchmark measures to indicate adequate annual progress to goal. CA sets ambitious performance targets designed to push academic results for educationally disadvantaged students beyond our current performance, which exceeds the statewide results for such students. The targets are designed to indicate performance that would represent closing the achievement gap between educationally disadvantaged students and their privileged peer statewide.

Collegiate Academies' evaluation plan employs sound methods and aligns to objectives.

CA has a solid foundation of performance management and evidence-based decision-making. As noted, with the support of a 2016 CSP grant, CA developed an effective set of management

structures and practices to support the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools. Federal grant monitoring, independent financial audits, and organizational reviews by CA's authorizers attest to strong operational and compliance systems. CA captures multiple indicators that align to critical outcomes and integrates ongoing opportunities for results-based reflection between and among organizational leaders, educational leaders, and teachers into its program design. This culture of evidence-based decision-making provides a strong foundation from which the rigorous evaluation of this initiative will be built and sustained.

This evaluation will focus on two areas: 1) CA's ability to add seats in existing schools while maintaining fidelity to its holistic support for students and core instructional elements and 2) CA's impact on academic achievement, post-secondary opportunities, and post-secondary success. These evaluation priorities align to major goals, objectives, and strategies proposed by CA and represented within its Logic Model for this initiative.

Evaluation Focus Area #1: The first focus area is related to growing quality seats in existing schools while maintaining fidelity to CA's model. CA's enrollment numbers will be benchmarked against data on overall charter and traditional public enrollment trends in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The evaluation will also leverage existing data that are tracked descriptively and aligned to the core instructional elements of CA's educational model at the macro level (e.g., important organizational milestones for expansion) and micro level (e.g., critical factors for implementation with fidelity, such as fidelity of enacted curriculum and instructional methodology). These data will be complemented by original data collection as appropriate, such as surveys and interviews of teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Surveys can be timed to collect early feedback from these stakeholder groups and may serve both as needs sensing information and baseline information to detect growth and change over

time. When appropriate, case studies may be developed to describe specific innovative and effective practices within or across CA schools.

Evaluation Focus Area #2: To address the second focus area, descriptive data will provide the larger contextual framework within which the schools are operating and to represent how CA schools are comparatively positioned. The performance of CA schools in relation to other schools within these districts and throughout the state will be reported. Additionally, a rigorous quasi-experimental analysis will be used to assess student achievement gains and outcomes, providing rich information to CA, its stakeholders, and the field. The quasi-experimental analysis will be designed to meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with reservations. Propensity score matching will be used to identify a comparison group of students based on several criteria: geographic locations near CA schools; grade levels served within comparison schools; student demographics; and baseline equivalence on achievement measures.

CA students will be compared as cohorts (based on enrollment dates) with comparison students. As this quasi-experimental design is executed, evaluators will monitor ongoing student enrollment (e.g., students that "switch" from a traditional to CA, or, vice versa, "drop" from a CA school to a traditional school), overall attrition and sample equivalence, and will determine appropriate adjustments (e.g., stratification or covariation) if necessary. Both groups of students (i.e., CA intervention students and the distinct comparison group) will be tracked longitudinally, particularly on standardized assessments in reading and math, and comparisons of student growth as a whole and by educationally disadvantaged subgroups will be analyzed. Group effects will be analyzed through multilevel modeling, nesting students within schools.

Evaluators will explore whether some CA sites have stronger student achievement gains and outcomes than others, and if so, will conduct exploratory analyses to assess whether aspects of

the CA model are related to variation in outcomes. For example, the contribution of the concurrent enrollment to student outcomes may be explored using regression analysis. It is anticipated that such analyses will be completed as summative reporting for the CSP grant is generated, giving CA schools time to implement new tactics and stabilize variation within and across schools. The evaluation working group will consider extant data and implementation trends to guide which independent variables are included in the model.

The Evaluation Working Group: Bellwether Education Partners (Bellwether) has agreed to provide the evaluation for this project. Bellwether is also serving as the evaluator for Collegiate Academies' 2016 CSP grant; continuing this partnership allows CA to build on prior evaluation work and avoid duplicative efforts. Bellwether's evaluation approach includes tethering rigorous evaluation methodology to evidence-based decision-making of an evaluation working group represented by organizational leaders and its own lead evaluator(s). This approach, particularly on a multi-year grant like the CSP, allows us to collectively agree to the specifics of the evaluation design, provides a structure for ongoing communication and feedback, and facilitates inevitable choices that must be made as challenges arise. Working as a team throughout the evaluation process allows organizations to grow and scale their analytic capacity as they are growing and scaling their programs. The evaluation working group will meet in-person at least once each year to plan the evaluation and provide ongoing briefings of results. Other meetings, including virtual, will be scheduled collectively; Bellwether strives for a minimum of monthly check-ins. The objectives for the evaluation working group will include:

- Ensuring the evaluation questions, design, tools, and related findings speak to the project goals and grant reporting requirements throughout the course of the assignment

- Providing context and information to guide the evaluation process and help ground findings and recommendations
- Optimizing participation from stakeholders during data collection
- Providing an opportunity for leaders within the organization to collaborate around solutions
- Identifying optimal ways to disseminate findings, including publications, website posting, conference presentations, social media, etc.

The Evaluation Framework: A preliminary evaluation framework has been developed to represent proposed evaluation questions and their alignment to key aspects of CA's approach. The related evaluation methods, including data that will be collected and analyzed, are detailed in Appendix I.8. In keeping with the logic model and with CA's objective performance measures, the evaluation framework addresses questions of whether expansion is unrolling as planned. In addition, the evaluation framework addresses whether CA is able to maintain or enhance the following aspects of its model: continuous growth of all employees, strong community relations and partnerships, appropriate infrastructure, a culture of growth, and a high quality instructional model focused on differentiation, achievement and growth, college readiness, literacy, and data-driven instructional choices. Finally, the evaluation framework addresses key student outcomes, such as the trajectory of student growth over time, ACT scores, and college acceptances, enrollment, retention, and graduation.

The evaluation framework is not an exhaustive representation of measures and data collection tactics. Rather, it capitalizes on metrics cited throughout this proposal that are or can be tracked and measured (e.g., number of schools and students and implementation indicators). To complement existing measures, the framework suggests metrics that may need to be added

(e.g. stakeholder perceptions of school climate). This preliminary framework in represents, at a high level, the supporting information and processes that drive the proposed evaluation design.

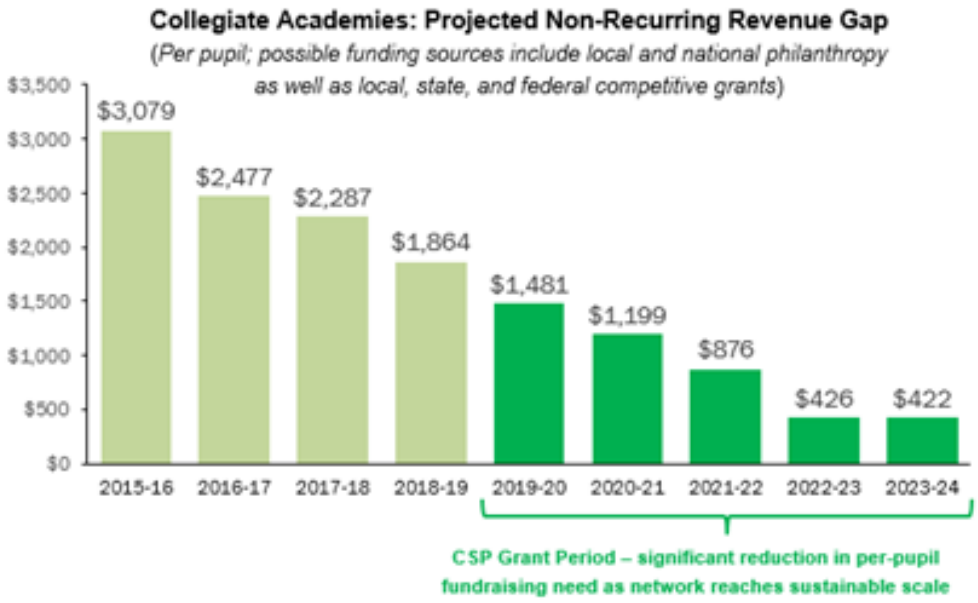
Reflecting Upon and Reporting Results: Data will be analyzed formatively (quarterly and annually) and summatively (project end) in response to the evaluation questions posed in the evaluation framework. The evaluation working group will reflect on formative results quarterly (e.g., project milestones, implementation variables) for ongoing decision-making related to program implementation and enhancement. Annually, the group will convene to assess progress toward longer-term goals (e.g., project milestones, implementation variables, and student outcomes), review formal evaluation reports and draft publications, and refine plans for the dissemination and communication of results to the sector and public at large.

Evaluation Firm, Team, and Qualifications: Bellwether is a nonprofit dedicated to helping education organizations become more effective in their work and achieve dramatic results, especially for educationally disadvantaged students. With experience conducting both short and longer term evaluations, manipulating existing data sets, designing instruments, collecting original data, and analyzing and reporting of various kinds, the Bellwether evaluation team has served a variety of clients and federal grants, including two CSP grantees, and is experienced in federal reporting. Furthermore, Bellwether has deep experience in advising CMOs in their expansion processes and will combine analytical rigor with knowledge about the specific and contextual variables of CA's organizational and growth goals. Please see Appendix B for bios and resumes of the Bellwether members of the Evaluation Working Group.

D. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

(D)(i) Collegiate Academies has a clear, attainable path to long-term financial sustainability.

Collegiate Academies will reach financial sustainability on recurring public funding from local, state, and federal sources during the project period. CA has already reduced its reliance on non-recurring revenue significantly (i.e., >50 % on a per-pupil basis since 2015), indicating significant progress towards sustainability:



Expansion schools will benefit from high-quality central office supports, expertise, and economies of scale in key functions, including financial operations, facilities acquisition and development, and curriculum implementation. Schools will fund the central office as shared cost that is distributed based on per-pupil revenue. In line with peer CMOs, growth in student enrollment will outpace growth at the Collegiate central office, thereby creating cost efficiencies without sacrificing quality service to existing and expansion schools.

Targeted fundraising will continue to enable CA to support students with quality, innovative programming. To date, we are proud of the strong philanthropic support we have received from the Charter School Growth Fund, the Oprah Winfrey Angel Network, and the Walton Family

Foundation, as well as from local supporters such as the Booth-Bricker Fund, the Charles W. and Elizabeth D. Goodyear Foundation, the Pro Bono Publico Foundation, New Schools for New Orleans, and New Schools for Baton Rouge. With these supporters, combined with results for educationally disadvantaged students that surpass those of the state, we are comfortable that philanthropy and competitive grants will sustain our modest need for subsidy when at scale.

Appendix H provides other key financial benchmarks and aspects of the strong multi-year financial and operating model, including:

- Significant reserves available for use, if needed: CA has a fund balance (i.e., net assets) of $4.36M, up 115% from 2015 ($2.02M).
- Thoughtful school-level financial and staffing model: school model is designed to enable each school will break even in or before its fifth academic year.
- Access to low-cost facilities: In New Orleans, the local district has provided all Collegiate schools with suitable public facilities at no cost. In Baton Rouge, we partner with New Schools for Baton Rouge to build and lease a new facility at a subsidized rate.
- Consistently clean audits with well-tested Financial Policies and Procedures with sound internal controls, fiscal responsibility, and accounting in accordance with best practices.

This approach aligns with our overall financial philosophy, which is to always focus on and invest in what is best for the students of CA. With this philosophy, our foundation of sound financial practices, and our progress toward reaching sustainability, CA is well-positioned to sustain our expanded charter schools after the CSP grant has ended.

(D)(ii) Collegiate Academies has a strong plan to achieve the proposed objectives.

CA's highly experienced management team and school-level staff will collaborate to achieve the objectives outlined in the CSP project on time and on budget. Building off of the structures,

systems, and staffing that have led to initial successes for our current Charter School Program grant, Collegiate proposes the following plan to accomplish new project tasks. The proposed management plan outlines activities and project tasks that are separate and distinct from those of our current CSP grant; all activities and project tasks are specific to the expansion of our schools beyond the growth that the current CSP grant supports. The following table outlines the responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks, with timing indicated according to the grant project quarters (Q1: October – December, etc.) and school years (Y1, 2019-2020; Y2, 2020-2021; Y3, 2021-2022; Y4, 2022-2023; Y5, 2023-2024). Note: Asterisked project tasks at the top of the table occur annually.

Timing	Project Task	Key Staff	Obj+
Q1-Q4*	Consult with community partners, government, and business leaders to implement and actualize the project with broad support across NOLA/BR	PD, Dir. Community Affairs	All
Q2-Q3*	Support school leaders in building their leadership team and developing these leaders	CEO, CSO	All
Q2-Q3*	Begin annual CA strategic planning/budget cycle	COO and team	All
Q2-Q3*	Hire new teachers and staff for expansion schools	School leaders, CTO	All
Q2-Q3*	Engage in targeted student recruitment for expansion schools and programs	Dir. Student Recruitment	All
Q4*	Finalize data submissions for third-party evaluation	COO (PD)	All
Q1/Y1	Establish reporting procedures, timelines, and work plans to complete methods for evaluation of expansion strategies (middle school, concurrent enrollment programs, high school expansion).	COO (PD)	All
Q1/Y1	Analyze LDE forthcoming changes to accountability policy to refine and finalize goals around concurrent enrollment expansion.	CAO; COO; Sr. Dir of College;	PS
Q1/Y1	Finalize and initiate plans for concurrent enrollment program expansion pilots at two CA high schools	Sr. Dir of College; CAO, SL/DFO/DI	PS
Q1/Y1	MILESTONE: Launch of concurrent enrollment pilot for 50 students.		
Q2/Y1	MILESTONE: MS leadership candidates are identified and enrolled in School Leader Intensive		
Q3/Y1	Initiate student recruitment planning for MS 1.	Dir. Student Recruitment (DSR)	MS

Q3/Y1	MS 1 leadership candidates complete School Leader Intensive training and final selection process is initiated (~15 months before expansion begins).	CEO, CSO, CAO	MS
Q4/Y1	Finalize all plans, hiring, student recruitment for concurrent enrollment programs.	CEO, COO, Sr. Dir of College	PS
Q4/Y1	MS 1 leadership roles selected. Initiate / finalize academic, operational, hiring plans for fall 2021 (Q1/Y3) launch.	CAO, Dir of Middle School, SL, DFO, DI, DCI	MS
Q1/Y2	MILESTONE: Launch full concurrent enrollment programs at ASA, LCA.		
Q1/Y2	Launch student recruitment plan for MS 1.	Dir. Student Recruitment, DFO	MS
Q3/Y2	Initiate student recruitment planning for MS 2	DSR	MS
Q4/Y2	All student recruitment and staff hiring for MS 1 complete.	DSR, DFO, SL, CTO	MS
Q4/Y2	MS 2 leadership selected. Initiate / finalize academic, operational, hiring plans for fall 2021 (Q1/Y4) launch.	SL, CTO, CAO, Dir of Middle School	MS
Q4/Y2	Complete full academic, operational, school culture, and student support planning for expansion of NOLA 5 and BR 2.	SL, DFO, DI, DMHS, Dean of Students	HS
Q1/Y3	MILESTONE: MS 1 launches within the G.W. Carver High School LEA.		
Q1/Y3	MILESTONE: Expand seats at NOLA 5 to 10th grade.		
Q1/Y3	Launch student recruitment plan for MS 2.	DSR, DFO	MS
Q4/Y4	All student recruitment and staff hiring for MS 2 complete.	DSR, DFO, SL, CTO	MS
Q1/Y4	MILESTONE: Expand seats at NOLA 5 to 11th grade.		
Q1/Y4	MILESTONE: Expand seats at BR 2 to 10th grade.		
Q1/Y4	MILESTONE: MS 2 launches within the Rosenwald Collegiate Academy LEA.		
Q4/Y4	All student recruitment and staff hiring for MS 2 complete.	DSR, DFO, SL, CTO	MS
Q1/Y5	MILESTONE: Expand seats at BR 2 to 11th grade.		
Q1/Y5	MILESTONE: Expand seats at NOLA 5 to 12th grade.		
Q4/Y5	Full program evaluation finalized, published, and results disseminated nationally.		

+ MS = Middle School expansion; PS = Concurrent Enrollment expansion; HS = High School expansion

(D)(iii) Collegiate Academies has a highly qualified, experienced team driving expansion.

Collegiate Academies' key staff and leadership team is comprised of high-performing individuals who set the highest bar of excellence in education.

The Project Director for this CSP Expansion project will be Davis Zaunbrecher, Chief Operating Officer. Davis started his career at Louisiana's Recovery School District (RSD), leading the development of Louisiana's Race to the Top grant. He also worked for the prestigious McKinsey & Company as a management consultant. Prior to join CA in 2016, he was the Managing Director of Strategy for New Schools for New Orleans. Since 2016, he has led an array of functions for Collegiate, including Finance, Operations, and Facilities, and serves as the Project Director for CA's 2016 CSP grant. Davis holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Virginia and a Master of Arts from Yale Divinity School. His full resume is attached. He will report directly to the CEO and will be supported by the following key CA staff:

Benjamin Marcovitz, founder and CEO of Collegiate Academies, taught in New Orleans, Washington, DC, and Boston, MA before founding Collegiate Academies. His work at Collegiate has earned him recognition from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, fellowships at IDEA's Scaling Up Institute, Achievement First's Charter Network Accelerator, the Pahara-Aspen Institute and the Broad Academy, as well as the Ryan Award for transformational urban school leadership. Additionally, he has served on the faculties of New Leaders and Leading Educators and presents with Relay Graduate School of Education, Future Leaders in the United Kingdom, and the Newark Charter School Fund, among others. Ben holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from Yale University and a Master of Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Margo Bouchie, Chief Schools Officer, works to ensure schools have the programming and teacher development to hit rigorous academic goals. Prior to joining the Collegiate team, Margo taught special education at Edward Livingston Elementary School in New Orleans and was a Teach for America Corps Member in Philadelphia, PA. As a founding member of the Sci

Academy team, she served as Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) and as a Special Education teacher. In her role as DCI, Margo built the academic program that has fueled Sci Academy's success. Margo holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies and a Master of Elementary Education in Special Education and Elementary Education.

Andrea Bond, Chief Academic Officer, has been a part of the Collegiate Academies team since 2011. During her first two years with the CMO, she served as the Director of Intervention at Sci Academy, CA's first school. She is responsible for ensuring that all students receiving intervention services reach their individualized and rigorous goals across diverse learner programming including; ELL Programming, RTI/MSS, 504, Special Education and aligned related services. Andrea has led CA in launching a true continuum of services for students with diverse academic, social-emotional and transition support needs. Additionally, she has collaborated with the CA team to create and implement a comprehensive data infrastructure that tracks progress of all scholars, at every level of the service provision continuum, toward their post-secondary goals. Prior to joining CA, Andrea taught for three years in New Orleans charter elementary schools while also serving as a Special Education Coordinator. She was a 2006 Teach For America corps member in Metro DC, where she taught for two years. She has masters in Special Education with a focus in Learning Disabilities from American University.

Soraya Verjee, Chief Talent Officer, works to ensure every classroom and role is led by a high quality teammate. She was a 2009 Teach For America Corps Member in Greater New Orleans and taught Algebra I at Sci Academy, where she helped attain the highest math scores in the Recovery School District of all open enrollment high schools. Prior to joining Sci Academy, she worked at The Bridgespan Group, a nonprofit management consulting firm. Later, she joined the KIPP New Orleans Team as the Director of Recruitment and Strategy. Since 2011, she has

served Collegiate Academies in the capacity of finding and keeping great teachers and staff for our students. Soraya holds a Bachelor of Science in Bioengineering.

The following staff will also support this CSP initiative according to their role and responsibilities: Stacy Martin, **Director of Community Affairs**; Lauren Katz, **Senior Director of College Completion Initiatives**; Erica Perez, **Director of Student Recruitment**. Please see Appendix B for their resumes.

Collegiate Academies is governed by a diverse Board of Directors and supported by a National Advisory Council.

Board of Directors: Collegiate Academies will continue to develop an active, strong board that is representative of our community (including CA parents) and will play a crucial role in supporting our strategic growth. In our CSP Monitoring report, WestEd spotlighted as a "Promising Practice" our recruitment and onboarding processes for new members of our Board of Directors. The process helps generate a strong, diverse pool of potential Board members, provides a thoughtful set of experiences with school and network leadership, and builds a deep understanding of the organizational values that drive our work. Please see Appendix I.9 for a full list of Board members and their affiliations.

National Advisory Council: Collegiate Academies' current strategic plan envisions deep impact in Louisiana, while leveraging experts and advocates at a national level to guide and support our programmatic strategy, fundraising, advancement, and advocacy efforts. The National Advisory Council serves as the standing body to provide these supports and coordinate opportunities for expanded impact on a national scale. Please see Appendix I.9 for a full list of National Advisory Council members.