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King of Prussia, PA 19406

www.IDEACyberSchool.org

Where every child is valued, nurtured and their genius developed so that each one shines brightly.

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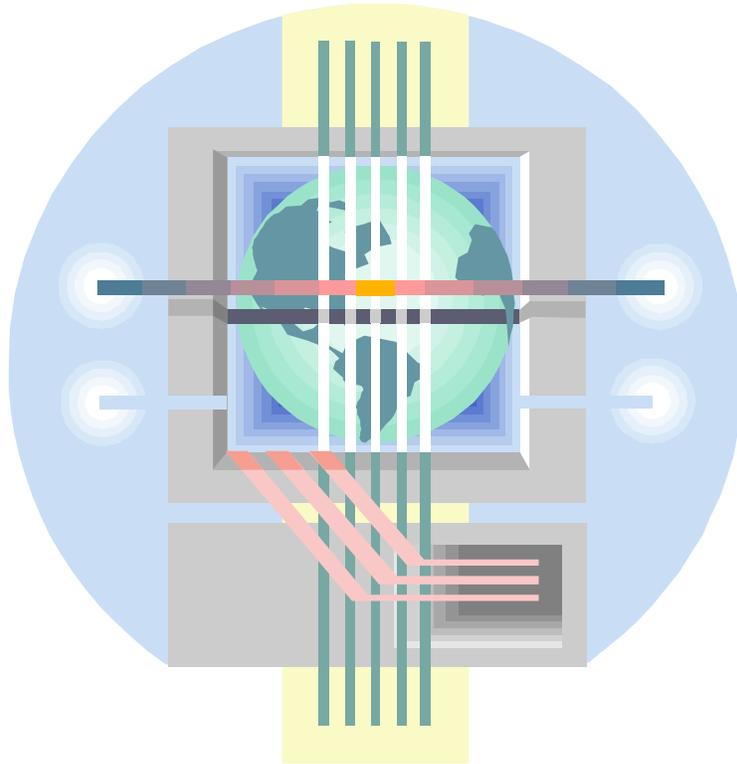
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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education Cyber Charter School Application

2007



Inspiring productive, fulfilled, life-long learners

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Mary I. Ramirez, Director

Division of Nonpublic, Private
and Charter School Services
Sheri Rowe, Chief

Division of Nonpublic, Private
and Charter School Services
Gregg Spadafore, Charter School Contact

Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

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If you have any questions about this publication, or for additional copies, contact:

Department of Education
Division of Nonpublic, Private
and Charter School Services
333 Market Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: (717) 705-2881
Fax: (717) 214-4389
Text Telephone TTY: (717) 783-8445

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Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
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School Law, Regulations, and Policy Unit
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Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Voice Telephone: (717) 783-3750
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2007 Cyber Charter Schools Requirements and Application

Introduction

This application format serves as the framework for the official 2007 application, submitted by a cyber charter school applicant to the Department of Education. In developing this format, the research-based components that are identified as essential in the planning process for the creation of a cyber charter school serve as the basis for this framework. The five essential components are School Design, Needs Assessment, Governance, Finance/Facility; and Administration. In addition to the requirements that follow, when completing the application the applicant should review and refer to the two Basic Education Circulars on charter and cyber charter schools. The charter and cyber charter school Basic Education Circulars are available at:

<http://www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/cwp/view.asp?A=11&Q=54323> (charter schools)
<http://www.pde.state.pa.us/k12/cwp/view.asp?A=11&Q=121873> (cyber charter schools)

The deadline for submitting the 2007 Cyber Charter School Application is Monday, October 1, 2007. If you are planning to submit an application, please contact the PDE Charter School Office for additional information regarding submission requirements.

Questions should be directed to:

Gregg Spadafore
(717) 705-2881

gspadafore@state.pa.us

or

Rose Agnew

(717) 705-8019

roagnew@state.pa.us

Application Requirements

In the development of your application, you are required to expand upon each of the five essential components as outlined on pages 8 through 16. Successful applicants will be knowledgeable in the implementation of all federal and state requirements that are applicable to cyber charter schools. Successful applications will include all of the following information per sections 1719-A and 1747-A of the Charter School Law, and describe how the school will meet the requirements of section 1743-A(c) and (d), the provisions regarding the dissemination of information to parents and school district, and section 1748-A, the provisions requiring the notification of enrollment and withdrawal from a cyber charter school.

Section 1719-A:

1. The identification of the cyber charter applicant.
2. The name of the proposed cyber charter school.
3. The grade or age levels served by the cyber charter school.
4. The proposed governance structure of the cyber charter school, including a

- description and method for the appointment or election of the board of trustees.
5. The mission and (measurable) education goals of the cyber charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals. Cyber charter school students shall be required to meet the same testing and academic performance standards established by law and regulations applicable to public school students.
 6. The admission policy and criteria for evaluating student admission which shall comply with the requirements of section 1723-A (of the Charter School Law).
 7. Procedures which will be used regarding the suspension or expulsion of pupils.
 8. Information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the cyber charter school planning process.
 9. The financial plan for the cyber charter school and the provisions which will be made for auditing the school under section 437 (of the Public School Code).
 10. Procedures which shall be established to review complaints of parents regarding the operation of the cyber charter school.
 11. A description of and address of the physical facility in which the cyber charter school will be located and the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements.
 12. Information on the proposed school calendar for the cyber charter school, including the length of the school day and school year consistent with provisions of section 1502.
 13. The proposed faculty and a professional development plan for the faculty of a cyber charter school.
 14. Whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the cyber charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, no school district of residence shall prohibit a student of a cyber charter school from participating in any extracurricular activity of that school district of residence: provided , that the student is able to fulfill all of the requirements of participation in such activity and the cyber charter school does not provide the same extracurricular activity.
 15. A report of criminal history record, pursuant to section 111, for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.
 16. An official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 Subch. C.2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.
 17. How the cyber charter school will provide adequate liability and other appropriate insurances for the cyber charter school, its employees and its board of trustees.

Instructions and Application Requirements Cyber Charter Schools (Continued)

Section 1747-A:

1. The curriculum to be offered and how it meets the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Ch.4 (relating to academic standards and assessment) or subsequent regulations promulgated to replace 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4.
2. The number of courses required for elementary and secondary students.
3. An explanation of the amount of online time required for elementary and secondary students.
4. The manner in which teachers will deliver instruction, assess academic progress and communicate with students to provide assistance.
5. A specific explanation of any cooperative learning opportunities, meetings with students, parents and guardians, field trips or study sessions.
6. The technology, including types of hardware and software, equipment and other materials which will be provided by the cyber charter school to the student.
7. A description of how the cyber charter school will define and monitor a student's school day, including the delineation of on-line and off-line time.
8. A description of commercially prepared standardized achievement tests that will be used by the cyber charter school in addition to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment test, including the grade levels that will be tested and how the data collected from the tests will be used to improve instruction.
9. The technical support that will be available to students and parents or guardians.
10. The privacy and security measures to ensure the confidentiality of data gathered online.
11. The level of anticipated enrollment during each school year of the proposed cyber charter school including expected increases due to the addition of grade levels.
12. The methods to be used to insure the authenticity of student work and adequate proctoring of examinations.
13. The provision of education and related services to students with disabilities, including evaluation and the development and revision of individualized education programs.
14. Policies regarding truancy, absences and withdrawal of students, including the manner in which the cyber charter school will monitor attendance consistent with the provisions of section 1715-A (9).
15. The types and frequency of communication between the cyber charter school and the students and the manner in which the cyber charter school will communicate with parents and guardians.
16. The addresses of all facilities and offices of the cyber charter school, the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements. If the cyber charter school has more than one facility, it must designate the administrative office where all student records shall be maintained as required by section 1748-A(h).

Section 1743-A(c)(d)

1. Describe how your cyber charter school will make available upon request, either in writing or electronically, the following information to each student's school district of residence:
 - a. A copy of the charter.
 - b. A copy of the cyber charter school application.

- c. A copy of all annual reports prepared by the cyber charter school.
 - d. A list of all students from that school district enrolled in the cyber charter school.
2. Describe how the cyber charter school upon request and prior to the student's first day in the cyber charter school will provide, either in writing or electronically, the following information to the parent or guardian of a student:
- a. A list and brief description of the courses of instruction the student will receive. The list shall be updated annually for each grade level in which the student is enrolled.

Instructions and Application Requirements Cyber Charter Schools (Continued)

- b. A description of the lessons and activities to be offered online and offline.
- c. The manner in which attendance will be reported and work will be authenticated.
- d. A list of all standardized tests the student will be required to take during the school year and the place where the test will be administered, if available.
- e. The meetings to be held during the school year between a parent or guardian and a teacher and among other school officials or parents or guardians and the manner in which the parent or guardian will be notified of the time and place for the meeting.
- f. The address of the cyber charter school and the name, telephone number and e-mail address of the school administrator and other school personnel.
- g. A list of any extracurricular activities provided by the cyber charter school.
- h. The names of the student's teachers, if available, and the manner in which each teacher can be contacted by the student or the parent of guardian.
- i. A list of all services that will be provided to the student by the cyber charter school.
- j. Copies of policies relating to computer security and privacy, truancy, absences, discipline and withdrawal or expulsion of students.
- k. Information on:
 - i. The cyber charter school's professional staff, including the number of staff personnel, their education level and experience.
 - ii. The cyber charter school's performance on the PSSA and other standardized test scores.
- l. Information regarding the proper usage of equipment and materials and the process for returning equipment and materials supplied to the students by the cyber charter school. A parent or guardian shall acknowledge, either in writing or electronically, the receipt of this information.
- m. A description of the school calendar, including, but not limited to, the time frame that will constitute a school year and a school week, holiday and term breaks.

Section 1748-A

Within 15 days of the enrollment of a student to a cyber charter school, the parent or guardian and the cyber charter school shall notify the student's school district of residence of the enrollment through the use of the notification form developed by the Department of Education.

See Attachment A: PDE Enrollment Notification Form

See Attachment B: Emergency Notification Form

See Attachment C: Document Request Form

- 1. The cyber charter school and the parent or guardian shall provide written notification to the school district of residence within 15 days following the withdrawal of a student from the cyber charter school.

See Attachment D: Student Withdrawal Form

CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

APPLICATION FACT SHEET

This application fact sheet is intended to be a “finger-tip” summary of your application. The information furnished below must be an accurate representation of the application and must correspond to the information provided in the body of the application.

Proposed Cyber Charter School Name (Must Include “Charter School” in the Title)

IDEA Cyber Charter School: Pennsylvania’s IQ Academy

Proposed Cyber Charter School Administrative Location (City/Town and Zip Code)

King of Prussia, 19406 County Montgomery

Intermediate Unit MCIU 23

Proposed Start Date July 1, 2008 for first full year; March 3, 2008 for opening

Federal Employer Identification Number 20-8730743

Contact Person: First Shari Middle Lynn Last Draayer

Organization IDEA Cyber Charter School City King of Prussia State PA

Zip Code 19406 Telephone (215) 869-6249 Fax Number 484-831-5090

E-mail SDraayer@IDEA Cyber School.com

Founding Coalition: Indicate Number of Representatives per Group	Grade and Age Ranges	Projected Student Enrollment Year 1-5
Parents <u>5</u>	Elementary <u>K-6 (5-12)</u>	1 st Year <u>2000</u>
Teachers <u>8</u>	Secondary <u>7-9 (11-16)</u>	2 nd Year <u>2400</u>
Business Partners <u>8</u>	Age of Kindergarten <u>5</u> by the first day of school.	3 rd Year <u>2880</u>
Community Based Orgs. <u>4</u>	Age of Beginners <u>6</u>	4 th Year <u>3456</u>
Museums _____	Highlight Appropriate Grade(s) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	5 th Year <u>4147</u>
Higher Education <u>4</u>		Total Number of Teachers: Year 1 = 61 51 Reg. Ed; 10 Spec. Ed Yr 2 = 77; 65 R; 12 SE Yr 3 = 93; 79 R; 14 SE Yr 4 = 110; 93R; 17 SE Yr 5 = 127;107R; 20SE
Other Group (Identify) <u>Nurse, OT, Musician, Atty,</u>		

Does the cyber charter applicant have an existing retirement system? Yes ___ No X
IDEA CCS will enroll our employees in and contribute to the PSERS.

Does the applicant group presently have access to a facility suitable for the cyber charter school’s administrative offices?

Yes _____ No X However; we have 3 commercial realtors who have committed to assist in the finding of an appropriate facility to house our administrative offices and there are many in the King of Prussia to Collegeville corridor.

School Focus: Describe, in brief terms and on an additional page, the proposed cyber charter school's mission, educational focus, and other essential characteristics.

Mission

The mission of the IDEA Cyber Charter School is to view education as an holistic paradigm; addressing its students' individual academic, social and emotional needs while recognizing their individual and collective life experiences. It is imperative that we continue to assist our students in personal development from their own life experiences and challenges, instilling in them the belief that they have the capacity for self-actualization and the personal responsibility to be productive, contributing, accountable members of society.

In order to accomplish these goals, the IDEA Charter School will be a dynamic, representative, democratic institution, empowering students and staff to create a sense of community. IDEA will allow students to grow, all while functioning daily in a microcosm of American society. By having an active role and voice in the decisions that directly affect their education and lives, our students will develop a sense of ownership of their education and their school, while demonstrating an increased commitment to education and lifelong learning. Each student's academic experience will be:

- Aligned with the Pennsylvania Standards and Anchors
- Personalized to and derived from individual student goals and interests
- Interwoven with real life opportunities that stimulate creativity

This approach will ensure that each student's innate genius will be maximized. The IDEA Cyber Charter School will thereby empower each student to be all they are capable of being through encouragement, inspiration, imagination, succor and social responsibility.

Educational Focus

The educational focus and distinguishing characteristic of IDEA is that every student's curriculum will be customized according to their academic levels, interests, mission statement, learning style and relevance to their life goals. The pedagogical foundation for IDEA is three fold – Understanding by Design, Differentiated Instruction and Constructivist theory. Using these pedagogies, IDEA teachers will be able to authentically teach the curriculum, meeting the PA State Standards in all areas, with individuation according to the design for each individual student. To that end, IDEA has teamed up with KC Distance Learning (“KCDL”) to provide our students with the most highly developed online curriculum available for students in 6th through 12th grades.

Other Essential Characteristics

IDEA has partnered with KCDL a leading provider of distance learning programs for students from sixth through twelfth grades, with core, Honors, and AP courses. KCDL's first programs were introduced in 1974 and they have enriched the lives of over 200,000 students through high quality online and correspondence education programs. KCDL currently operates, in partnership with school districts and charter operators, three state-wide virtual schools, in Wisconsin, Kansas and Arizona, and will be launching a fourth in Washington state early in 2008. KCDL's significant experience supporting state-wide virtual schools has allowed it to create a robust infrastructure that supports students, parents and teachers as they work together to create a comprehensive and rigorous online academic experience.

One of IDEA's hallmarks, as well as an essential characteristic, is its cluster programs. These face-to-face Placement Clusters are expected to make a significant and measurable difference in the success of our students, from the beginning of their enrollment at IDEA until they leave the program. Placement clusters (which are described in detail below), will provide the opportunity for IDEA staff and faculty to get to know our students as they begin their relationship with IDEA, and as they develop as students. In introductory Placement Clusters, staff and faculty will meet face-to-face with students to:

- Administer computer-delivered assessments
- Design individualized student curricula for the year
- Train students on how to use IDEA educational technology and
- Provide instruction on how to maximize their cyber educational experience by learning how to cyber school

Another essential characteristic of IDEA is the thoughtful and planned involvement of our Paraeducators. Paraeducators are the parents, guardians or other adults who are providing the at-home, day-to-day oversight of the IDEA students' education. At IDEA, the Paraeducators are part of the educational team; in order to ensure that this role is meaningful, paraeducators will receive training in the same areas (pedagogical and philosophical) that the teachers do. This training will give them an ability to understand their students' education at a deeper level than is typical in other educational settings. Paraeducators will be expected to write mission statements and will be encouraged to include the rest of the family in the things that are being taught and learned in trainings. Paraeducators will be considered and treated as part of the professional team educating children at IDEA. There will be varied and significant motivations to complete all the training. Paraeducators will receive evaluations so that when they have successfully completed three years as a paraeducator, they will be entitled and qualified to apply for open positions as Touchstones.

Touchstones are another essential feature of IDEA, as they are the first line of contact for students joining IDEA. These IDEA employees, though not teachers, will play a pivotal role in supporting both students and paraeducators. Touchstones will give each student a single point of contact, throughout their IDEA experience, who will be able to provide guidance and answer questions. The academic literature on developing successful educational programs is clear: providing students with a consistent relationship can often make the difference between students doing well by taking responsibility for their education and underperforming or worse, dropping out.

IDEA's Student Resource Department is a multi-faceted department that will help families remove barriers to their children's education, arrange interesting and relevant field trips, arrange cluster and testing sites, as well as schedules for standardized NWEA Testing, PSSA and PASA testing. This team will identify the resources in each community from which IDEA draws students; such resources include:

- Student opportunities for employment or volunteering
- Appropriate educational and informative locations for field trips
- Assistance with housing, food, health care, or utility assistance as student and family needs dictate

The goals of this department include contributing to the mission of IDEA to make education fun, interesting and relevant. The team is also dedicated to helping students and their families find ways to remove barriers to education. Such barriers include:

- Loss of employment
- Loss of electricity or heat
- Displacement from housing
- Lack of internet access
- Lack of food

With the partnership of KCDL and IDEA, our students will enjoy an amazing array of the best developed courses, aligned to the PA State Standards and Benchmarks, available to students anywhere. Through its two divisions, Keystone National High School (A Pennsylvania-licensed online high school) and Aventa Learning, a leading provider of online curriculum), KCDL can offer over a hundred courses for students in sixth through twelfth grades. These courses will be supplemented by courses developed by IDEA teachers in response to student interest. This powerful combination will create a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum that will ensure that IDEA students who complete the program will be prepared for the next step of their lives, either in work or in post-secondary education. Having been taught to begin with the end in mind, IDEA students will be prepared for the transitions they will face as they leave the nurturing environment of their high school for life where they will have greater independence, responsibility and opportunities.

Essential to the success of IDEA is the ability to attract a large enough student body. IDEA's broad and comprehensive student support programs can support a large and diverse student population. IDEA is confident that it can create such a student body because of its unique offerings and robust infrastructure. By combining IDEA's distinct pedagogical methodologies with KCDL's experience building awareness for statewide virtual schools, students from throughout the state of Pennsylvania will learn about the excellent quality and rigorous student experience IDEA will provide. Through a systematic outreach process including direct mailings, open houses, community outreach and other strategies, IDEA will build enough awareness to build a viable student body.

Finally, IDEA Cyber Charter School will house the James Clifford Forsythe Memorial Library, the first lending library in a cyber school, because we believe that all children need access to books. Many students have very limited access to books, primarily because they live too far

from their local library to make regular visits convenient and practicable. too. The James Clifford Forsythe Memorial Library will be a PA ACCESS Library. This means that our books and all books of every other PA Access Library will be available to our students and to children outside of IDEA as well. We are very excited to be able to offer this opportunity for virtually unlimited access to books for our students. Students who choose to borrow books from the library will receive a return shipping envelope with postage to return the book on or before the due date. This will be a completely free library experience for every student.

FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATION ADDENDUM TO COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

Public Law 108-382: Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 imposes certain additional requirements for applications for Public Charter Schools. The following application serves as an addendum to the Cyber Charter School Application for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and, if approved, may entitle the applicant to federal funds.

- I. Describe how the cyber charter school agency will provide for continued operation of the school once the federal grant has expired.

IDEA Cyber Charter School has woven a Development Department into the structure and design of the school. The Director of Development will be conducting regular fundraising events; organizing and supervising the writing of grants; and soliciting individual and corporate sponsors. Students and parents will organize and participate in fundraising for specific events and programs to benefit students. In addition, the district of residence of each student will be billed for their share of tax monies designated for each student from that district.

- II. Describe how the federal sub-grant funds will be used, including specifically how such funds will be used in conjunction with other federal programs (Attach Charter School Start-up Grant).

Multiple attempts were made to locate PDE-362: Charter School Start-up Grant by several members of the team writing the Application. We made repeated searches of the PDE website and were not successful. We called Greg Spadafore, Rose Agnew (whose message says that she is no longer with the department), Jane Ann Baney and Sheri Rowe and were not able to locate anyone who was able to assist us. We will be more than happy to submit the PDE-362 and will continue our attempts to locate the form to do so.

If the PDE-362 has been replaced by the CSF eGrant, IDEA Cyber Charter School completed and submitted the application for the CSF eGrant Planning grant in March, 2006. It was written and submitted electronically and we were unable to capture a copy before it was sent to the PDE; however, the PDE acknowledged receipt at that time.

We will submit an application again for the Implementation portion of the CSF eGrant before appearing before the PDE Committee to defend our Application in December, 2007.

Federal Sub-grant funds will be used for the following purposes:

1. Staff Training Retreat – During the last week of June, 2008, IDEA will bring staff together for training and orientation. This Annual Retreat will take place the last week of June every year and will have the purpose of assessing and critiquing the previous school year and planning for greater effectiveness in the coming year. These staff training retreats will be held in partnership with Cabrini College Education Department and will be held at a Retreat Center in Pottstown.
 2. Payroll to cover staff salaries until monies from districts are received.
 3. Student Placement Clusters – Funds will be used to rent the facilities in which to hold the clusters; for purchasing a server for NWEA Testing; for NWEA setup expenses; for the Renzulli Curriculum (which is described in greater detail below); and for NWEA per student testing costs.
 4. Rent until payments from the districts begin.
 5. Telecommunications networking for offices.
-

- III. Please check X that you will provide an annual report to the Department of Education, no later than August 1, including information on the progress made in meeting the cyber charter school's stated goals and objectives. [NEED BOX TO CHECK]
- IV. Please check X that you will cooperate with the Department of Education in the evaluation of your cyber charter school program. [NEED BOX TO CHECK]
- V. Please check X that you will provide additional information and assurances required by the Department of Education. [NEED BOX TO CHECK]

SIGNATURES

Name of Proposed Cyber Charter School IDEA Cyber Charter School

Date September 30, 2007

President/Vice-President _____
 Shari Draayer, President, Board of Trustees

Secretary/Treasurer _____
 Carla Bravar, Secretary, Board of Trustees

FEDERAL ASSURANCES FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

PLEASE SIGN THE FOLLOWING ASSURANCES AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THIS FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATION

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM ASSURANCES FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Pursuant to section 10303(b) of Public Law 108-382: Improving America's Schools act of 1994, as a duly authorized representative of a Public Charter School, I certify the following:

- the charter school, with an enabling state statute, is exempted from state and local rules that inhibit the flexible operations and management of public schools;
- the charter school will make a contribution to assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students in achieving State content standards and State student performance standards and, in general, will contribute to the State's education improvement plan;
- the charter school is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
- the charter school operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- the charter school provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
- the charter school is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- the charter school does not charge tuition
- the charter school complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1993, and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- the charter school admits students on the basis of a lottery, if more students apply for admissions than can be accommodated;
- the charter school agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary and secondary schools in the State.
- the charter school meets all applicable Federal, State, and Local health and safety requirements; and
- the charter school operates in accordance with State law.

Charter school IDEA Cyber Charter School Date August 15, 2007

Authorized Representative _____
Shari Draayer, President, Founding Coalition

I. SCHOOL DESIGN

1. Mission Statement: The mission of the IDEA Cyber Charter School is to view education as an holistic paradigm; addressing its students' individual academic, social and emotional needs while recognizing their individual and collective life experiences. It is imperative that we continue to assist our students in personal development from their own life experiences and challenges, instilling in them the belief that they have the capacity for self-actualization and that they have a responsibility to be productive, contributing, accountable members of society.

In order to accomplish these goals, the IDEA Charter School will be a dynamic, representative, democratic institution, empowering students and staff to create a sense of community. IDEA will allow students to grow, all while functioning daily in a microcosm of American society. By having an active role and voice in the decisions that directly affect their education and lives, our students will develop a sense of ownership of their education and their school, while demonstrating an increased commitment to education and lifelong learning. Each student's academic experience will be:

- Aligned with the Pennsylvania Standards and Anchors
- Personalized to and derived from individual student goals and interests
- Interwoven with real life opportunities that stimulate creativity

This approach will ensure that each student's innate genius will be maximized. The IDEA Cyber Charter School will thereby empower each student to be all they are capable of being through encouragement, inspiration, imagination, succor and social responsibility.

A. Briefly describe the core philosophy or underlying purpose of the proposed school.

In addition to the standard practices of empirically based research, IDEA leaders will use New Paradigm methodology to ultimately analyze our data, our programs, courses, teaching methods and every facet of IDEA. The central characteristic of New Paradigm Research is that participants, both students and paraeducators, will be included in the planning of this school. Future IDEA students and their parents have been involved in the design of IDEA, and have been instrumental in the drafting of this application. Through this approach, we are creating an atmosphere of ownership among parents and students. We believe that when students own their education they concomitantly take more responsibility for it. This is a concept that has been successful in numerous sectors of our society. Habitat for Humanity is built on this philosophy and has been enormously successful in providing housing and a better life for millions of people to date. New Paradigm research has shown to be not only accurate in predicting outcomes, but also in influencing the participants to make changes that improve their own lives. Thus, we believe that the greater the participation by parents/paraeducators and students with touchstones, teachers, student services, student resources and other administrators, the greater the successful outcomes.

To test this philosophy, a foundation of the IDEA model is the gathering of empirical (objective and subjective) data for research. These data will be analyzed and scrutinized continuously to inform decisions, plans and projects, for individual students and for the school at large. We will be able to be proactive and conduct effective problem solving before any student's problem (i.e., academic underachievement, truancy, excessive absences) become a crisis.

B. What is your overarching vision of the school?

Explanation: Define a concise plan for an innovative public school that will lead to improved educational performance. Consistency between the mission and the educational programs should be articulated to achieve improved performance.

When students enroll at IDEA they will be enrolled in a face-to-face placement cluster located in their geographical area. During the placement cluster, students will take assessments to determine current academic levels by use of standardized testing. These tests will be administered again in the spring to measure growth and inform placement for the coming educational year. Students will also be given an interest inventory and interview to support them as they participate in the development of their Customized Plan of Instruction (“CPI”). The placement team will consist of a teacher, a guidance counselor or specially trained guidance representative, and a technical support representative.

The purpose of the placement team is to:

- get to know the student and their family;
- assess current levels of academic progress;
- orient the student and their family to the joys and challenges of cyber education;
- inform them of their rights and responsibilities at IDEA
- make them familiar with the standards and benchmarks and other laws governing their cyber education in PA
- acquaint them with their curriculum which will be determined by testing results, academic history, student interests and goals
- provide them access to, and training on, KCDL and Blackboard technology

Curriculum that is not delivered (in hard copy or immediate access through user name and password) at the time of the placement team meeting with students and their families will be ordered so that students receive it before the beginning of school or within 15 calendar days of placement in IDEA Cyber Charter School.

By using this plan of customizing every student’s educational program, IDEA will equip, motivate, prepare, nurture, inspire and launch every student to develop their genius and become all they are capable of being.

Instruction will take place using a wide variety of delivery methods and learning resources, including: the internet, textbooks, classrooms, collaboration with teachers, lectures from experts in particular fields of study from around the world, and interaction with fellow students. Most formal meetings with teachers will take place using the internet, and a virtual classroom tool, Elluminate. Students will also have access to their teachers through email and by telephone.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will serve students from kindergarten through twelfth grade, drawing from every part of the state of Pennsylvania. The founders of IDEA Cyber Charter School have designed the school to serve many students with many different kinds of needs. These students will include but are not limited to:

- students who are temporarily (short or long term) or permanently homebound because of illness or disability;
- pregnant and/or parenting teens;
- students with behavioral health needs;
- young people who are incarcerated;
- youngsters who have non-academic interests and talents they wish to pursue where flexibility of attendance is necessary;
- students who need to work while attending school;
- students at risk for dropping out, or for being or becoming involved with law enforcement and the judicial system;
- and others children for whom brick and mortar education is difficult or even impossible.

IDEA will be prepared to enroll 100 students in each grade from kindergarten through 5th grade and 200 students in each grade from 6th through 12th grade by July 1, 2008. IDEA Cyber Charter School will be sectioned into an elementary school, a middle school and a high school with student government at developmentally appropriate levels in each section. We will provide infrastructure and staffing to be able to increase enrollment of students by 20% each year for the first five years of the school's existence if the demand so warrants.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will equip, prepare and launch each student for the post-secondary and any other continuing education programs they wish to pursue. In addition to academic preparation, IDEA students will have opportunities for internships, participation in cooperatives, community service and volunteerism. IDEA's Director of Development is building a Student Opportunity Fund so that students will have support to participate in both academic and non-academic opportunities while at IDEA and for a robust scholarship program to support and propel our students to reach their goals after they graduate.

2. Measurable Goals and Objectives:

- A. What are the school's measurable academic goals and objectives to promote student learning?

Explanation: Develop clear measurable goals with objectives for building the educational program that reflects a commitment to academic excellence for all students.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will adhere to Pennsylvania's academic and curricular standards. The founders wish to promote learning without a fear of failure. The concept of goals and objectives is to promote learning and monitor progress so that adjustments and modifications can be made in order to not only make sure students are making progress but to intervene when there is a risk of falling behind. IDEA will adhere to all current requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Legislation, and will collect all information necessary to provide accurate results with regard to student progress in aggregated and disaggregated form.

For the foundational model of pedagogy which teachers, paraeducators, touchstones and the Special Education Department will all be trained and in-serviced, the founders of IDEA Cyber Charter School have chosen Understanding by Design. This program is designed to make schools better by providing educators with state-of-the-art educational thinking, tools, and training. We are confident that this program will equip our educators to tackle the challenging issues we face as cyber educators. This model is consistent with our commitment to make students and student improvement in performance the central focus of the school.

On an annual basis, IDEA Cyber Charter School’s administration, faculty and staff, using our data-based approach, will assess our program. This assessment is intended to ensure that we persist in our commitment to nurture improvement of all students’ learning and demonstration of that learning – including test results. The procedure for accomplishing this will include reviewing the curriculum in relationship to test standards/scores, teacher observation and evaluations, paraeducator/parent, student surveys and other measures of learning progress. IDEA will continue to purchase supplemental materials and support teachers working collaboratively during test administration to assure our testing procedures are designed and implemented to give the students the best opportunity for authentic success within the test guidelines.

The educational program for IDEA Cyber Charter School includes curriculum aligned with the PA Academic Standards, Benchmarks and Anchors, NCLB, and IDEIA, including current state and federal regulations, as fo*Explanation: Develop clear measurable goals with objectives for building the educational program that reflects a commitment to academic excellence for all students.*

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
A 4 year HS graduation rate equal to or higher than 90% to improve by 5% each year until our 100% goal is reached.	Student Success Teams, Touchstones, TA’s, Teachers, relationships	The percentage of students receiving a diploma after attending IDEA HS for four years will be 90% or better	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
5% increase from initial local assessment grades to final local assessment grades in reading, writing math and science	Programs to reach goals, tutoring, lesson assistance, online programs, co-ops in the student's community, internships & volunteerism	Year-end assessment results will demonstrate an overall 5% increase in each subject area from the results of the initial or previous assessments.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
The percentage of students failing a grade will decrease by 5% annually	All programs, teachers, touchstones, para-educators, principals, guidance counselors, community involvement, clusters, everything we do.	Assessment testing, student grades, promotion rate and teacher observation assessments	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
All IDEA students who scored below basic/ grade level on entrance exams will improve their standardized MAP Assessment scores in core subjects by 1.5 grade levels.	Provide a rigorous, supportive and intensive curriculum.	High attendance rate, high assignment completion rates, high attendance at the synchronous and non-synchronous classes and scores on the year end NWEA testing.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
Student attendance in school will be at 95%	Year round school; students choose the 180 or more days they attend; when absences are necessary from those chosen days – students can choose additional / makeup days.	Quarterly overall school attendance data assessments.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Strategies and Interventions	3. Performance Indicators	4. Results and Progress
Attendance at PSSA testing will be at 95% or better	Contact with students, explaining the importance of the testing to student, testing facilities within one hour's drive of the student's home and flexible scheduling, school will pay for accommodations when necessary, rewards for attendance.	95% of students will attend the PSSA testing	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
Educational delivery will be accomplished via Understanding by Design principles across the curriculum	All lesson plans and units across the curriculum will be written in UbD formats.	All teachers, touchstones and paraeducators will be trained in UbD	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
PA Standards and Benchmarks will be incorporated into the design of all lesson plans.	All lesson plans will indicate the PA Standards upon which their objectives are based	Teachers will have access to UbD Exchange (or an equivalent) to facilitate lesson planning in accordance with the PA Standards	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
-Various curricula sufficient to choose appropriate levels and teaching styles for CPI's for each student. - Teachers will create units for different curricular areas.	KCDL Curriculum is of high-quality and is aligned to the PA Standards - Trained teachers will be responsible for creating and teaching lessons using a unit approach.	The placement team will conduct assessments, interviews in conjunction with students and paraeducators will select best choices for each student.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
Via the Constructivist method, students will actively participate in learning	Teacher/student made rubrics, individual products, collaborative group work, student created presentations	Teachers and others will establish an atmosphere that encourages students to ask questions.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
IDEA staff and faculty will develop substantive relationships with students beginning at initial placement.	Relationships with students and paraeducators will begin with the Placement Team and continue with Touchstones, teachers and other staff.	Students will receive support from touchstones, who will receive support from teachers, principal and the rest of the Executive Team.	

1. Clear Measurable Goal	2. Assessment Evidence	3. Supervision & Support	4. Student Objectives
Students will take age and ability-appropriate responsibility for their own education all the time.	-Students will participate in the design of their CPI's -Choose the 180 or more days that they will attend school - Arrange make up days when they miss a day.	Students will receive support and assistance including organizational skills training, keeping records of course assignments and testing.	

Academic Goal

1) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in mathematics as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvements as it relates to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

1) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in math concepts by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with focus.

Academic Goal

2) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in writing as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

2) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in writing concepts by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

3) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in reading as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

3) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in reading concepts by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

4) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in the study of language as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

4) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in language by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

5) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in visual and performing arts as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

5) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in visual and performing arts by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

6) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in the sciences as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

6) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in the sciences by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

7) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in social studies as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

7) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in social studies by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

Academic Goal

8) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in technology as it relates to their grade level expectations. Alternative learners will demonstrate improvement in relationship to their individual ability.

Academic Objective

8) Each student will demonstrate proficiency in technology by completing assignments, chapter reviews and scheduled testing with greater than 70% proficiency. Alternative learners will demonstrate proficiency greater than 70% with assignments adapted with consideration for memory challenges, cognitive processing speed, perceptual challenges and challenges with attention.

C. What are the schools measurable non-academic goals and objectives to promote student performance?

Non-Academic Goal

1) Each student will demonstrate a strong understanding of good choices as it relates to their own personal health and safety.

Non-Academic Objective

1) Each student will demonstrate the critical thinking skills to make decisions in areas such as health, education, relationships, spirituality and work that will maximize their own success while minimizing harm to others.

Non-Academic Goal

2) Each student will demonstrate a strong understanding of how to incorporate physical exercise and activities into their daily routine so that they can maintain a level of fitness suitable for their age.

Non-Academic Objective

2) Each student will write a list of exercises and activities that they can do during the day to stay physically fit.

2a) Each student will demonstrate an understanding that consistency is more important than intensity.

Non-Academic Goal

3) Each student will demonstrate a strong understanding of the skills necessary to get and maintain a job consistent with their interests and abilities.

Non-Academic Objective

3) Each student will demonstrate an understanding of their own interests and abilities. Students will learn how to fill out an interest check list and skills assessment to find a suitable job with a high level of satisfaction.

Non-Academic Goal

4) Each student will demonstrate the ability to set short- and long-term goals in areas such as health, spirit, work, education and leisure.

Non-Academic Objective

4) Each student will write a list of achievable goals that are related to areas such as health, spirit, work, education and leisure.

Non-Academic Goal

5) Each student will demonstrate social competence when interacting with family and peers during structured and unstructured activities.

Non-Academic Objective

5a) Each student will develop a repeater of social skills to make and keep friends.

5b) Each student will maintain socially appropriate eye contact

5c) Each student will utilize body language and observe body language in order to Communicate effectively.

5d) Each student will demonstrate the ability to utilize techniques learned to deal with frustration.

- 5e) When appropriate, each student will use a voice that is clear and audible so that others understand what they are attempting to communicate.
- 5f) Each student will demonstrate effective listening skills and the ability to take turns during discussions.
- 5g) The student's family will designate a time during the day to discuss daily events. During this time it is suggested that they discuss social situations that may have occurred and to utilize scenarios, fictitious examples and personal experiences to address issues such as conflict resolution, balancing leadership-follower roles and dealing with stress. When appropriate, it is suggested that the family utilize social stories to give a visual and written description of how to deal with social situations.
- 5h) The student's family may help the student develop an understanding of body language by turning the volume down on the TV and discussing the non-verbal cues the characters or actors are demonstrating.
- 5i) The student's family may do over exaggeration of the student's non-verbal body language and communication and discuss what it is conveying to others.

3. Educational Program:

- A. Describe the educational program of the school, providing a detailed description of the curriculum and the content in all subject areas.

The focus of the educational program of IDEA addresses each student's distinct educational needs and interests. The program does this by emphasizing individualized instruction and customized curriculum. IDEA is able to provide individualize instruction and customized curriculum by taking advantage of the sophisticated educational technologies that exist today.

The IDEA curriculum is rigorous, comprehensive and engaging. IDEA curriculum incorporates subject matter expertise with technological advancement to insure pedagogical success as can be seen in the documents attached. The IDEA curriculum is Pennsylvania State aligned (for courses that do not currently have state standards, IDEA will provide alignment when such standards are published) and provides students with a wide variety of choice. IDEA also offers a broad array of Advanced Placement courses, all of which have passed the College Board's audit. The KCDL online curriculum is constantly being updated and expanded.

See Attachment: IDEA Elementary Curriculum with Alignment to PA State Standards and Benchmarks.

See Attachment: IDEA Secondary Curriculum with Alignment to PA State Standards And Benchmarks.

See Attachment: Catalog of KCDL Courses

See Attachment: KCDL Course Descriptions

See Attachment G: KCDL 6-12 Curriculum with Alignment to PA State Standards and Benchmarks

A unique component of the IDEA Cyber Charter School educational program is that it will operate year round. Students, with the guidance of their paraeducators and placement team, will be allowed to choose during which state mandated 180 or more days they wish to work on their education. This flexibility reflects IDEA's foundational belief that students own their education. This flexibility will also give more students the opportunity to achieve perfect attendance, an achievement that will be magnificently celebrated at IDEA. Students will set quarterly attendance goals which, if reached, will also be celebrated and rewarded through a student recognition program.

Maintaining a year round school will provide students with many opportunities:

- Students who struggle will have the additional time they need to learn and own the concepts that will provide them with the foundations for academic success.
- Students with attention deficits will benefit enormously because they will be able to spread out the days they work effectively in lieu of the hours in a day when they are no longer effectively productive.
- Students who need enrichment will have the resources and support available that they need to shine and flash their genius about.
- Highly motivated students will have the opportunity to progress more efficiently and to take more courses of interest to them or that will benefit them as they prepare for post-secondary education.
- Students who face health challenges that would otherwise limit their education will have opportunities to study when they are able to do so.
- It will be enormously beneficial to students who are employed and working.
- Students who are incarcerated will be able to develop in very positive ways which will provide them with vision, preparation and opportunity that can propel them to become productive, contributing members of society.
- Most students will be able to attain perfect attendance.

The year round approach also gives IDEA the chance to deal with truancy with more than simple punishment. Because the roots of truancy are often complex and hidden, resolving truancy issues can be complicated and time consuming. By providing a year round program IDEA staff can have the time necessary to help students resolve the root causes of their truancy. Because its a year round program truant students will have the opportunity to redeem the time they have missed. Additionally, students who show consistent improvement in attendance after a truancy issue will be celebrated for improvements, not just for perfection.

- B. Describe how your school will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711. Provide a projection of the number and type of special education programs that will be operated directly by your charter school or through contracts. Provide a projection of the number and type of related services that will be provided directly by the charter school or through contracts.

The Founders of IDEA believe that parents are very important participants in their children's special education process because they know their children, their strengths and weaknesses, their genius and their challenges.

The Special Education Department of IDEA and the school as a whole will ensure the rights of children with disabilities. IDEA will post the special education policies and procedures on the website and a manual will be given to every parent of children coming into IDEA with IEP's and to the parents of all children discovered in Child Find. Specially trained special education touchstones and Special Education Teachers will be available to all parents and students who may have related questions.

It is the policy of IDEA to provide special education services within the School, with actual services being delivered to children in their own homes or educational home base. All students with special needs have the right to a quality education appropriate to their needs, abilities and interests. Depending on individual student need, Special Education staff will adapt or supplement regular education curriculum with additional curriculum, programs and modifications.

IDEA will comply with all Federal and State legal requirements. Every student identified as having a disability will be provided an Individual Educational Program (IEP) specifying goals, level of service, ancillary services in the least restrictive placement based upon their disability. Prior to enrollment, registration forms will be reviewed to identify current IEPs from another school. The parents will be fully informed of their rights, procedures and responsibilities under special education law. Only staff with a legitimate educational interest and those responsible for the education for any particular student will have access to the student's IEP.

1. IDEA Cyber Charter School will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711 as follows:

Consistent with the intent of Child Find, parental notification activities will be combined with screening at the time of student enrollment and throughout the student's educational process. Initially, parents will be provided with detailed questionnaires requesting information about their students learning styles and functional abilities. These responses will be amplified and validated through the use of a screening tool that is delivered in person by the IDEA Placement Team.

The screening activities will include but are not limited to hearing and vision screens to be completed by the school nurse or by a private physician mandated under PA Public School Code. Motor, speech and language screenings and ongoing analysis of the student's response to instruction; performance on state wide assessments; and the reviews of group based data such as enrollment records, health records and transcripts/report cards.

The Assistive Technology screening tool, developed by a rehabilitation engineer, will assist parents, teachers and the team in determining if accommodations for computer access, visual tracking, visual processing, organization, aids to assist with working memory (based on grade level and the specific needs of the curriculum) are required. Students identified as requiring an accommodation (for these specified areas of need or others that are identified) in this phase will receive a comprehensive assistive technology evaluation at their home to determine the adaptive components required based on their functional abilities and limitations and in consideration of their intended coursework.

Consistent with Chapter 711, the parent or teacher of a child with a disability will be informed that they have the right under 34 CFR Part 300 to request a reevaluation at any time. Likewise, all adaptive solutions specified as a result of this process will be monitored by a third party rehabilitation engineer (contracted to IDEA) to provide student specific support on technology efficacy issues. IDEA will reevaluate students with disabilities at least once every 3 years. Students with disabilities who are identified as mentally retarded shall be reevaluated at least once every 2 years.

All special education teachers working at IDEA will be certified by the State of Pennsylvania in the area of special education. All special education teachers and services will be overseen by our Director of Special Education who holds special education supervisory certification. The special education director will be responsible for staff development in the area of special education. The Executive Team and the Director of Special Education will supervise and maintain student records.

IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

Child Find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate and evaluate children residing in the state, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities regardless of the severity of their disability and determine the student's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education can be made available. The types of disabilities that if found causes a child to need services are autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment including blindness.

Screening procedures that have been established by IDEA include but are not limited to ongoing analysis of the student's response to instruction; performance on state wide assessments; MAP's and the reviews of group based data such as enrollment records, health records and transcripts/report cards.

IDEA Founders recognize that a student may need more help than is typical through their curriculum and so adopt this policy:

When it becomes apparent that a student has a physical, sensory, mental or emotional disability or may otherwise be in need of special education services, or if the parents express a concern about the child's progress in school, the child may be referred for a special education evaluation. The evaluation process will be conducted in accordance with applicable state and federal law summarized in this policy which will be scrutinized and updated consistently for changes in laws.

The evaluation will include information from the child's teacher, such as the results of informal tests and narrative statements describing the student's strengths and needs. The evaluation process must include an evaluation by the appropriate individuals, (such appropriate individuals include but are not limited to a school psychologist; tests conducted by a hearing specialist, medical doctor for a child with health problems; input from a therapist if certain

related services, such as physical, language, speech or occupational therapy, may be needed). For parents or teachers seeking additional information please contact:

Director of Special Education
IDEA Supplemental Education Services
500 Galleria Drive,
Johnstown, PA 15904

Evaluation Process – when screening indicates that the student may be exceptional IDEA will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. The evaluation is the procedure used to determine whether a child has a disability and if so, the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the student needs. In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is called a Multidisciplinary Evaluation and is conducted by a Multidisciplinary Team which, at IDEA will include at least a school psychologist, a teacher (who has contact with the student) and a parent/legal guardian. The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) will be conducted in accordance with specific timelines. It will include tests and procedures that are not racially or culturally biased. The evaluations and tests that are given to students, who are speakers of other than English, will be given in the language or form that is most likely to give meaningful information. In all other ways, testing will be administered in ways that accommodate for their known disabilities. Students will be given a spectrum of tests to most likely reveal their strengths and weaknesses.

“Evaluation” means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. The term procedures are used selectively with an individual child and do not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

Once parental consent for evaluation is obtained, IDEA will have timelines and procedures specified by law which it will follow. Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request at any time that IDEA Cyber Charter School conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. Requests for a multidisciplinary evaluation should be made in writing to the Special Education Contact person. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation IDEA Cyber Charter School will provide the parent with a form for that purpose.

Students may be referred for an initial evaluation two ways:

1. Parents may make a request at any time
2. The school may contact the parents for permission to evaluate

See Attachment : Permission to Evaluate

See Attachment : Permission to Re-evaluate

The **MDE process** results in a written Evaluation Report (ER) that includes recommendations on a child’s eligibility for special education services. All information collected is protected in accordance with state and federal laws and by IDEA’s policy regarding confidentiality and school records.

In order to request a **MDT evaluation** parents will contact their child's teacher, school counselor, Principal or Director of Special Education. IDEA will re-evaluate students receiving special education every three years and students with mental retardation every two years. Before the public school can proceed with an evaluation, it must notify the parents in writing with the specific types of testing and assessments that it intends to conduct, of the date and time of the evaluation and of the parent's rights. The evaluation cannot begin until the parent signs the written notification, "Permission to Evaluate", and returns it to the school. Parents also have the right to obtain an independent education evaluation. The school district must provide information regarding where an independent evaluation may be obtained if the parent requests it. Under certain circumstances (i.e., if there is a disagreement between the school and the parents and the evaluation demonstrates that the parents were correct) an independent education evaluation may be obtained at public expense. The parent may also request in writing when they wish for the school to pay for the outside evaluations.

Under Pennsylvania law, every student with a disability has the right to free appropriate public education and related services at the public expense via an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This means that students with disabilities who need special education must receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment including related services that help the student benefit from the special education program. These may include but are not limited to physical and occupational therapy, speech and language, assistive technology coordination and other services that support the student as they grow and learn. These services will be delivered to students in their own homes unless otherwise requested by the parents.

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be written by a team and will include the parent/legal guardian, paraeducator, general education teacher, special education, and a local education agency (LEA) representative of IDEA. The team may also include the school psychologist or someone who can interpret the evaluation results and at the parent/guardian's request or that of IDEA other people who know the child well or who have worked with the child. The team members may bring notes and outlines to the meeting but the IEP will be written during the meeting. We will write the IEP and will include a description of all programs and services necessary to help the child be successful at the IEP meeting. The IEP team uses information that is in the Evaluation Report to write a comprehensive Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The parents will get a written notification of when, where and why the meeting will be held and a list of people attending. The IEP meeting will be scheduled at a time that is mutually agreed upon so that all persons may attend.

The IEP will be completed within 30 calendar days after the evaluation team issues an evaluation report. The IEP will be in place as soon as possible, but no later than 10 days after the IEP is completed.

The student's plan will be reviewed every year at an IEP meeting, or more often if requested by the parent or any other IEP team member.

The IEP will include annual goals which will describe in measurable terms what can be expected of the student to learn during the course of the year. If a student participates in the

Pennsylvania Alternative Assessment, short term objectives must be included in the IEP, which are sequential steps in order for the student to reach the annual goals.

During the meeting, the team will also determine what services and programs are needed and where, what kind, how much and how often special education and related services will be provided along with the beginning dates and how long they will last. Also, the team will determine the method of evaluation that will be used when determining if the student is making adequate progress towards his/her annual goals. Progress will be reported to the parents every 9 weeks. During the IEP meeting, the IEP team will also determine how much, if any the student will not participate in the general education curriculum. The team will also determine what supplemental aids and adjustments need to be made in order for the child to succeed in the general education class such as extended time on class assignments and/or test. The team will also document any supplemental aids or modifications that will be made in order for the student to participate in the Pennsylvania State Assessment or if the student will need to participate in the Pennsylvania Alternative Assessment.

The IEP team will determine what services and programs are needed to provide the student with the support to meet his/her individual needs in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The team will also determine where, what kind, how much, and how often special education and related services will be provided and the dates services/programs will begin and how long they will last. The IEP Team will establish the method of evaluation that will be used when determining if the student is making adequate progress towards his or her annual goals. Progress will be reported to the parents every 9 weeks. During the IEP meeting, the team will also determine how much, if any, the student will not participate in the general education class, or in the general education curriculum and any adjustments and supplemental aids and services in the general education setting that the student needs in order to succeed in the a general education class/curriculum. For example, it could include allowing students extended time on test and/or assignments. The team will also determine if a student needs any modifications on the Pennsylvania State Assessment or if the student needs to participate in the Pennsylvania Alternative Assessment.

When developing a student's IEP, IDEA will consider the following:

- Parent concerns
- whether the child exhibits behaviors that interfere with his/her learning and therefore needs a behavior management plan
- the needs of students with limited English language skills
- communication needs of students
- whether the child needs assistive technology devices or services to actively participate in the least restrictive environment.

Accommodations

Assistive technology is basically any kind of technology that can be used to augment the activities of daily living, and particularly those that will remove barriers to education and improve quality of life for our students at IDEA. Students with disabilities strengths and weaknesses vary but often ADL's and just living – such things as talking with friends, going places or participating with their peers in other activities is especially challenging. Assistive

Technology devices are tools that can help students overcome the challenges, enabling them to live meaningful, productive lives more independently

Assistive technology, which helps to level the playing field for individuals with disabilities by providing them with the means to fully engage in life's activities, ranges from a simple (low-tech) device such as a magnifying glass, to a complex (high-tech) device, such as a computerized communication system. AT devices can range from complex and expensive to simple things that will make performing the mechanical work necessary to complete school work; it can also be a substitute for something that a student is not able to perform such as an augmentative communication device that provides a voice for a child who lacks that communication ability.

Some examples of AT that make it possible for people who need accommodations to increase their independence include:

- For greater independence of mobility and travel, people with physical disabilities may use mobility aids, such as wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers. Adapted car seats and vehicle wheelchair restraints promote safe travel.
- Hand-held GPS (global positioning system) devices help persons with visual impairments navigate busy city streets and use public transportation.
- Special computer software and hardware, such as voice recognition programs and screen enlargement programs, enable persons with mobility and sensory impairments to carry out educational or work-related tasks.
- Education and work aids such as automatic page turners, book holders, and adapted pencil grips enable children to participate in classroom activities.
- Bowling balls with hand-grips and one-handed fishing reels are a few examples of how technology can be adapted for sporting activities. Light-weight wheelchairs have been designed for organized sports, such as basketball, tennis, and racing.
- Adaptive switches make it possible for a child with limited motor skills to play with toys and games.
- Devices to assist a person with daily living tasks, such as cooking, dressing, and grooming, are available for people with special needs. For example, a medication dispenser with an alarm can be set to remind a child to take daily medication. A person with use of only one hand can use a one-handed cutting board and a cabinet mounted can opener to cook meals with improved independence and safety.

To determine the specific AT needs of students at IDEA, we will contract for an AT assessment. To this end we have researched and have found the Sierra Group because they have agreed to serve all of our students regardless of location in the state; they are able to provide the technicians and the therapists to serve our children with AT needs; and they have a well developed transitional program to assist our students from school to work or high school to higher learning. The Sierra Group comes with a recommendation of former Gov. Tom Ridge, *"My administration is committed to eliminating barriers for Pennsylvanians with disabilities, so they have opportunities to contribute their talents to our businesses, our schools and our communities. The Sierra Group shares that vision and, through creativity and innovation, helps make it a reality one person at a time."* Former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge

The Sierra group will either contract for or perform the evaluations in our students' homes. If it is determined that a student needs AT modifications to enhance, increase or become successful, the Sierra Group has the developed infrastructure to meet our students' needs. The Founders and Director of the Special Education Department recognize that AT is an ongoing need and ongoing technical assistance, in most cases will be necessary and will be a part of each student's IEP and preparation for transition to their highest possible level of independence during and after high school.

Educational Resources for Assistive Technology:

The Sierra Group - <http://www.thesierragroup.com/services.htm> - services cover every aspect of training, recruiting, accommodating, placing and employing people with disabilities.

The Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD) www.fctd.info offers a wide range of assistive technology resources for disability organizations, AT providers, educators and families of children with disabilities.

Alliance for Technology Access - www.ataccess.org

Abledata - www.abledata.com

Assistivetech.net - www.assistivetech.net

AbilityHub - www.abilityhub.com

AT Training Online Project - www.atto.buffalo.edu

Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers - www.taalliance.org

Association of State Technology Act Programs - www.ata.org/stateatprojects.asp

http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel.doc.cfm/1/14/86/86-86/448

Assistive Technology 101 <http://www.fctd.info/resources/tech101.php>

http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel.doc.cfm/1/14/86/86-86/448

10 Minute presentation http://www.portical.org/Presentations/vaughn/assist_tech/main.swf

Assistive Technology Links <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/methods/technlgy/te7links.htm>

Assistive Technology Terms http://www.infogrip.com/tech_terms.asp

Assistive Glossary http://www.education.uiowa.edu/icater/AT_glossary.htm

Michalisa Marshall Pugh, Esquire EdLaw Special Education Lawyers www.PaEdLaw.com

Educational Setting

IDEA believes that all students need to be placed in a class that will give them as many opportunities as possible. Therefore, once the IEP is completely developed, the team will then look at the different classes to see where the IEP can best be delivered and the child can succeed. The team will then make a decision about the type of services, the level of interventions, and the types of interventions. The types of services include:

- Autism, including Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- Blindness or Visual Impairment
- Deafness or Hearing Impairment
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Disabilities
- Neurological Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Serious Emotional Disturbance
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Other Health Impairments

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

. An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives, and the individualized programs and services which the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention. Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate, with children who are not disabled.

IDEA students who are not found ineligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as handicapped students and therefore be protected under federal statutes (34 CFR Part 104 and 28 CFR Part 35). IDEA will ensure that qualified handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in all school programs and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student. In compliance with federal laws IDEA Cyber Charter School will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate and possible for the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" may be distinct from those applicable to eligible or thought to be eligible students. The CWD Charter School the parent may initiate an evaluation if they believe a student is a protected handicapped student. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services handicapped students, parents should contact the Special Education Contact.

Confidentiality

IDEA protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its exceptional, thought to be exceptional, and protected handicapped students (if not protected by IDEA '97 or Pennsylvania's special education regulations) in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws, policies, and regulations.

Education records means those records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or by a party acting for the agency. Educational agency, for purposes of this notice, means the local school district and/or the Intermediate Unit. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records that include but are not limited to:

- Personally identifiable information - confidential information that includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student's family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student's identity easily traceable.

- Directory information - information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. Parents have the right to inspect and review a child's education record. The school district will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or any due process hearing, but in no more than 30 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the school principal or other appropriate school official. Parents have the right to a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the record. While the district cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.
2. If parents think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The school district will decide whether or not to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing.
3. Parents have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. "Consent" means: the parent(s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by IDEA as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); person or company with whom IDEA has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the professional responsibility. Directory information may be released without parent consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information.
4. Upon request, IDEA discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

5. Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirement of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Role of the Special Education Coordinator:

- Form a partnership with the teacher to develop appropriate instructional practices to Meet student needs.
- Coordinate the administration of formal and informal educational assessments.
- Interpret the results of assessments, observations and consultations to develop appropriate programming strategies.
- Facilitate effective communication with students, parents, teachers, administration, Special Education support staff and community based agencies.
- Share up-to-date professional information regarding Special Education.
- Receive referrals requesting Special Education evaluation from the Child Study Team.
- Participate in Child Study Team meetings.

Special Education Personnel

All Special Education Coordinators will have the proper certification and be highly qualified according to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards and requirements. Our support team may consist of speech and language pathologists, guidance counselors, psychologists, rehabilitation engineers, and occupational therapists.

IDEA will comply with the Annual Special Education & FERPA Notice - IDEA Cyber Charter School recognizes and understands the requirements of the school to give annual notice regarding Special Education services and programs and the rights of students with disabilities and notification of rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The annual notice will be published in newspapers or other media before any major identification, location or evaluation activity and will contain all information required by I.D.E.I.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004). IDEA Cyber Charter School will also notify parents annually of their confidentiality rights according to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) on the school's website and in a letter sent out with the final report card for each student's academic year.

Provide a projection of the number and type of special education programs that will be operated directly by your charter school or through contracts.

See Attachment: Policy Manual

See Attachment: Special Education Policies

We anticipate serving students with a wide range of needs and abilities. Our teachers will be trained to identify special needs, gifted students and limited English students early on. At the Placement Seminars and during the first few weeks of school, teachers will work with students and administer curriculum-based tests to determine exactly where the child fits in the

educational program. Concerns and behaviors that cannot be addressed by common interventions will be referred to special education staff.

One of the first interventions for students who are struggling in the educational program is an in-school tutoring program. The program utilizes paid aides (students from upper grades with teaching talents as well as local college and university students), volunteers from the Virtual Family Program and from businesses and industry in the students' communities, and professional staff on an as needed basis.

IEPs developed by the district of residence will be reviewed and if appropriate revised to fit the cyber school delivery model. Special services required by a student's IEP that are not provided by the school will be provided by the local Intermediate Units or through fee for service programs at local hospitals or other health care facilities. These include, but may not be limited to: mobility training, adaptive therapy, notifications, evaluations, psychological and counseling services, assistive technology devices, speech and language services, resource room and special classes, occupational therapy, transportation when required, interpreters for deaf or hard of hearing.

IDEA will first seek to employ all ancillary service providers, but will outsource or contract for these services if these providers cannot be hired. Primary responsibility for the Special Education program will be that of the Director of Special Education. In addition to the Special Education Coordinator, IDEA will open with between three and six full time Special Education teachers, three full time touchstones working in Special Education under the teacher's direction, two days per week of Speech/Language pathology, one day per week of Rehabilitation Engineer support, and ½ day of Occupational Therapy. Subsequent hiring or acquiring of staff will be based on caseload and disability needs during the schools first two years.

(1) Provide a projection of the number and type of related services that will be provided directly by the charter school or through contracts.

As indicated above, IDEA will first seek to employ ancillary services providers and will commit to a staffing level at the time the school opens based on our projections of the needs of our anticipated student census. As the student population grows and individually assessed needs are recognized, IDEA will continue to provide services in the following areas: Special Education Teachers, touchstones working in Special Education under the teacher's direction, Speech/Language pathologists, Guidance Counselors/ Counselors, Rehabilitation Engineers, and Occupational Therapists. As a statewide program, the Special Education Coordinator may seek to contract with suitably qualified individuals or organizations throughout the Commonwealth to meet specific student needs.

(2) Obtaining and Maintaining Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities

IDEA states in its application that assistive technology devices are part of the services that the local school districts must provide for a student with a disability, if determined by the IEP team. A cyber charter school is responsible for all aspects of the educational services for its students with disabilities, not the school district.

The need for a comprehensive home-based assistive technology evaluation is predicated on the access needs of a student in a Cyber learning environment. It is this realization that will

trigger IDEA to supply and install all required adaptive technology and assistive components at the student's home to facilitate the student's learning goals. Qualified personnel reporting to the Special Education Coordinator will specify the required adaptive tools and IDEA will purchase and provide these items and tools for the students use. IDEA will provide any and all required training to the student on the -use of required adaptive tools to ensure their ability to participate in the curriculum in accordance to their IEP. Likewise, IDEA will provide the learning team (including the parents/guardians/ paraeducators and ancillary personnel) with on-call technical support on questions regarding the capabilities of the accommodations. IDEA will provide (through staff and contract arrangements) on-site software/hardware maintenance and will provide re-training on accommodations when required.

B. Describe how your school will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711. Provide a projection of the number and type of special education programs that will be operated directly by your charter school or through contracts. Provide a projection of the number and type of related services that will be provided directly by the charter school or through contracts.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711 as follows:

1. IDEA will provide alternate assessments - IDEA Cyber Charter School will ensure that children with disabilities are included in all general state and district wide assessment programs and alternate assessments. These assessments will be aligned with challenging academic state standards or alternate standards as adopted by the state. Appropriate accommodations and modifications will be given as indicated in IEP. Records of testing, accommodations and student performance will be maintained by the school.
2. IDEA will comply with the Annual Special Education & FERPA Notice - IDEA Cyber Charter School Founders recognize and understand their requirements of the school to give annual notice regarding Special Education services and programs and the rights of students with disabilities and notification of rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The annual notice will be published in newspapers or other media before any major identification, location or evaluation activity and will contain all information required by I.D.E.I.A. (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004), 20 U.S.C. 1200 et. seq.) IDEA Cyber Charter School will also notify paraeducators annually of their confidentiality rights according to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) on the school's website and in a letter sent out with the final report card for each student's academic year.
3. IDEA Cyber Charter School recognizes that assistive technology devices are part of the services that local school districts must provide for a child with a disability, at no cost to the child's family, if determined by the IEP team. IDEA Cyber Charter School will also be responsible to maintain and repair assistive technology used to implement an IEP. The IDEA Cyber Charter School Board also recognizes that the IEP team is responsible for determining the need for assistive technology devices. Assistive technology device is defined as any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities. We further recognize

and acknowledge that all timelines set forth in state and federal laws are fully applicable to assistive technology devices which will be secured on loan or lease if manufacturer delay is anticipated.

4. IDEA Cyber Charter School will provide one-to-one support for students with behavioral disabilities including the individualized assistance that a teacher or other staff member might provide when an IEP or 504 team determines that the student needs that support for all or part of the school day. Although these services might be available and funded through MA (Medical Assistance), IDEA CCS will assume the responsibility to provide them so that there are no delays or gaps in service even if the school must provide the qualified staff. Additionally, the policy discusses proper documentation requirements and collaborative requirements with MA.
5. IDEA Cyber Charter School Executive Team will conscientiously conduct Child Find activities and will be responsible to ensure that children with disabilities are identified, located and evaluated and that a practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children with disabilities are currently receiving special education and related services. The Placement Teams will be thoroughly trained to understand their responsibilities as part of Child Find. If they even have a suspicion that a student may need evaluation they will refer them to the Director of Special Education. The Special Education Director will evaluate further and assess each student according to their past and current records, assessments and other evaluations. He or she will assure public awareness, outreach, screening and pre-evaluation screening specifics. Record keeping and recording will be done in compliance with IDEA and FERPA. Parents will be kept informed on a regular basis with regard to their children's progress relative to the goals set forth in the IEP. The students' teachers will inform them formally on a bi-monthly basis about their progress, and more frequently on an informal basis.
1. IDEA Cyber Charter School will develop and maintain behavioral support programs for students with disabilities through our Guidance Department. Students with disabilities who engage in inappropriate, disruptive or prohibited activities will be disciplined in accordance with their IEP. All school discipline will follow the philosophies of 7 Habits and Love and Logic in line with state and federal laws and Board policy. Students with disabilities will not be expelled if the particular misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of his or her disability. Current guidelines are listed in the policy however; the administration will consult with the solicitor whenever there is a question or a doubt regarding the discipline of special education students because the guidelines are subject to change.
7. IDEA Cyber Charter School welcomes and looks forward to serving students with disabilities and special education needs. No child will ever be turned away on the basis of their special education needs. Even the most challenging needs will be viewed as an opportunity to learn and develop creativity in meeting each child's needs so that barriers to their education are addressed from the beginning of their tenure in IDEA. All IEPs will include annual measurable goals and short term objectives/ benchmarks. IDEA Cyber Charter School provides year round schooling to all students. While students are

required to attend 180 days they are welcome to attend as many days as they wish or need to meet their goals according to their CPI's which they are welcome to change as they grow.

8. The IEP team is comprised of teacher, paraeducator/paraeducator, student, special education teacher, touchstone, school guidance counselor, administrator/principal (LEA), therapists and other support service providers. Most meetings will take place via telephone conference including how we will meet /do adaptations and modifications of instructions for students; specificity of how often collaboration takes place (monthly or as specified in IEP) and the record keeping of collaboration and follow through.
9. Children with demonstrated physical, sensory, mental or emotional disabilities or otherwise be in need of special educational services, or if a paraeducator expresses a concern about the child's progress, the child may be referred for an evaluation.
10. The entire evaluation process will be conducted accord to state and federal laws. Understanding that laws change, the Executive Team, Special Education and Guidance Counselors will, as a team, take full responsibility monitoring and responding to those changes.
11. The instructional delivery at IDEA is largely homebound; however whenever a student requires additional services in order to thrive and succeed educationally, those services will be provided.
12. IDEA Cyber Charter School will provide FAPE for all students with disabilities including those requiring intensive interagency approaches. We have several departments (Student Resources, Guidance, Special Education) with resources in place for expeditiously locating services for difficult to place students. We will utilize resources including the I.U. District, County MH/MRs and child welfare when they would be in the best interest of our students for each student who needs services.
13. The Executive Team and the appropriate Directors (Special Education, Guidance), teachers and touchstones of IDEA Cyber will insure that Least Restrictive Environment and inclusion occurs at all levels from academics to extra curricular activities, to sports, camping and volunteerism being confident that inclusion is to the maximum benefit of all students.
14. The founders of IDEA believe that inclusion is infectious. If opportunities for inclusion are explained / done in positive ways, everyone catches the spirit and reaps the benefits. We believe that it is inclusion that causes great memories to be made. Tommy will never forget that game when he scored his big play with everyone cheering him on. The spectators will never forget it. The players on both teams had no doubt done some amazing plays and had scored wins for their teams, but this will be a game that they will be able to remember when they are old and tell their great-grandchildren. Everyone benefits, and it is hard to say in most cases, who benefits more.

We believe these benefits are duplicated and multiplied with inclusion and diversity of experiences in volunteerism. It is hard to tell which group benefits the most – the volunteers or the volunteered for.

15. IDEA founders recognize and acknowledge that there may be students from time to time who are too ill or whose needs are so profound that inclusion will be limited or perhaps even unrealistic and the needs of those students will be individually assessed to be met in the best interest of each student, and all such decisions will be strongly weighted on the input and desires of the paraeducators/caregivers/paraeducators and where the use of supplementary aids and services being adequate to achieve inclusion have been eliminated.
16. IDEA Cyber Charter School Founders recognize that we are bound by Chapter 711 of Pa. Regulations, Charter Schools Services and Programs for Children with Disabilities but are not exempt from federal special education laws or regulations including, but not limited to, I.D.E.I.A. and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. IDEA Cyber Charter School is responsible to identify, locate, and evaluate children with disabilities. The school is also responsible to develop and implement programs to determine which children with disabilities are currently receiving needed special education and related services. The policy also discusses documentation requirements, child find, public awareness, systematic screening activities, and evaluation of success of public awareness and child find activities. As stated above, IDEA Cyber Charter School will joyfully welcome all children, regardless of their disability.
17. IDEA Cyber Charter School shall adhere to federal and state laws pertaining to privacy rights including, but not limited to, FERPA as amended and to its accompanying regulations; IDEIA; Pa Public School Code of 1949; Chapters 12 and 711 of the PA Administrative Code and other provisions applicable to Charter Schools. The Executive Team is designated to be responsible for maintenance, access and release of exceptional student records. This policy is to be used in combination with the IDEA Cyber Charter School Students Records Policy. The Executive Team shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy, which includes protection of confidentiality, maintenance of records, release of information, and paraeducator's request for amendment of records.
18. IDEA Cyber Charter School will ensure that an individual is assigned to act as a surrogate of the child if no paraeducator or person acting as a paraeducator can be identified or if the charter school can not locate the paraeducator after reasonable effort. The surrogate will be selected in a method permitted by state law and may not be an employee of the State Educational Agency, charter school or any other agency involved in the education or care of the child. A judge may appoint a surrogate for a ward of the state. Homeless youth not in the physical custody of the paraeducator or guardian must be appointed a surrogate by the charter school. Consent for initial evaluation of a ward of the state must be obtained from the individual designated to represent the interest of the child.
19. The Executive Team will be responsible to ensure that in-service trainings are appropriately and adequately provided to address the special knowledge required to

serve unique needs of children with disabilities including low incidence disabilities. These trainings will be part of the Professional Development Plan and Act 48 credits will be available. Personnel should be asked about their training needs on a regular basis.

20. School design plans are in place in the initial placement process and yearly course placements for students assessing and developing customized goals for every student. The IEP team will address the student's course of study when writing an IEP for any student 16 or older, or earlier than age 16 if agreed upon by the IEP team, or for any student who will turn 16 during the course of the IEP. IDEA Administration will document and take responsibility for the implementation of procedures to carry out this policy. Using either a program such as IEP writer or a model IEP Form such as is found here <http://www.pattan.net/regsforms/School-AgeFormsandFormats.aspx> the IEP Team will develop each student's IEP according to the ER/CER, history, paraeducator/paraeducator insights and needs of the student.
21. The Board of Directors of IDEA Cyber Charter School will ensure that students who are handicapped by the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be handicapped under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to I.D.E.I.A. The rights of handicapped students and their paraeducators under Section 504 will be joyfully addressed and met.
22. The founders of IDEA are committed to preparing all students for post-high school education, employment, and independent living. Every student who enrolls in the school will be assessed for strengths, educational levels and individual needs related to special education. Environmental modifications will be instituted to assure access to their education. Students who need speech, occupational, and physical therapies will receive the necessary and appropriate amount of services to enable them to access their environment and education.
23. Therapists will work in conjunction with the education team to help communicate the student's needs and make modifications in order to further develop each student's skills.

IDEA expects to enroll a number of students who will be considered at risk for school failure, who have or need IEPs and/or who have physical disabilities. We will take a proactive approach and utilize the following strategies to overcome the barriers to education that these issues present:

- Develop an open and working relationship of support and encouragement between students, staff, and those involved in the students educational/life goals.
- Design the student's program in conjunction with their goals and interest with input from their paraeducators/care givers related to what may be the best program for that student.
- Provide curriculum with real world and interest based examples.
- Emphasize communication and conflict resolution through learning seminars.

- Provide consistent encouragement with the use of recognition, celebration, praise, and awards.
- Develop school spirit and a sense of ownership of the school.
- Provide successful experiences and a sense of community through projects and interaction with other members of the school.
- Provide a variety of community based and school based projects to develop a sense of community and accomplishment.
- Devise meaningful home based projects that contribute to the family dynamics and promote a sense of belonging in their own home.
- Provide opportunities for team based instruction projects.
- Help develop organization skills so that students have a sense of control and power in their learning process and daily routine.
- Help develop organization skills so that students have a sense of control and power in their learning process and daily routine.
- Maintain consistency and structure so students can know what to expect.
- Remain open minded to how difficult it is to struggle with learning new information and remembering facts so that they can be applied appropriately.

Learning Through Doing (Experiential Knowledge)

IDEA will utilize a number of programs and community based activities that will reinforce learning, a sense of community, and a sense of accomplishment through real world learning experiences. This will include programs such as the, If I Had A Hammer program for build education. As its web site notes, this is an innovative, academics-based program that puts the entire construction of a house-from working with a budget to putting the roof on-in the hands of the students! Students work in groups to assemble the 8 X 11 foot house, in less than two hours. Complete with windows, doors and a front porch, the free-standing house is the end result of communication, teamwork, and hands-on application of math and science concepts. Through this process, students learn the real life application of subjects they have studied for years in school: math, science, social studies, language arts and more. Hammer isn't so much about building a house, as it is about showing students how education gives them the tools to build a successful life. IDEA will promote learning and applying what is learned in the community through activities such as growing plants and planting them at a local nursing home. This will not only teach students about science but will also teach them a sense of community.

IDEA will offer the following support to insure learning through doing:

Students will have many opportunities to engage in hands on activities that promote learning while actively participating in a project.

Supplementary learning experiences for subjects such as math, reading and science, which involve physically participating in the activity to learn.

Affiliations with community based programs that have activity based programs.

Students will be engaged in real life activities as part of the curriculum that lend complement and validate learning.

Creative freedom of teachers to design lesson plans with hands on experiences.

Open discussions with students and paraeducators to uncover learning experiences students may already be involved in and could further develop their education through.

Group based community activities.

IDEA students will learn to be curious, creative, confident, community oriented, and independent. As IDEA fully believes that education is the key to advance in life It is the school's mission to make sure that the students meet their fullest potential.

IDEA will achieve this in the following ways:

Encourage paraeducators / paraeducators to celebrate students when they do their best, and complete assignments in a manor reflecting their ability.

Educate paraeducators / paraeducators and educators on how to utilize student's strengths and interest to develop strategies for learning.

Encourage paraeducators / paraeducators to discuss school often.

Provide the technical and educational support needed to keep students on task.

Keep an open discussion about the importance of education.

Incorporate a motivational / celebratory system in conjunction with the student and their paraeducator that is meaningful, when goals are achieved. IDEA will suggest and support paraeducators on using strategies such as placing a sticker on a page assignment to indicate a reward when the student gets to that page.

Educate paraeducators and students on ways to minimize distractions, maximize lighting, maintain supplies, stay organized, and maximize the overall learning environment.

Provide assignments and curriculum in a motivating and creative way.

In addition to meeting the Commonwealth's standards for core curriculum subjects, IDEA will offer supplementary curricular materials with an emphasis on independence. These will include books and technology from leading publishing companies like AGS Publishing which is part of Pearson Learning Group. This will include titles such as Life Skills Math, Skills for Independent Living, Information Tools, Mastering Spelling, English I Missed, Writing in the Real World, Reading Skills for Life, and Read to Work.

IDEA Cyber Charter School faculty and administration will assure that all students learn and make progress throughout each student's instructional program. IDEA will provide the emotional, academic, and structural support necessary to accomplish this duty. Although reading, writing, math, science, and computer technology are a strong emphasis, success for our students in these areas will be contingent on IDEA'S ability to provide the support needed to facilitate success. Competence in life is a must for IDEA students.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will tailor each IEP (individual education plan) to maximize the success of the student's individual needs related to their education. Each plan will be made with a

strong influence from the student and paraeducator / paraeducator/care giver. A team approach with the student's best interest will be IDEA's lynch pin for success. After a plan is established, proven methods of teaching will be emphasized to assure success on an individual basis. IEP's and teaching plans will be driven by the creative influence of the education team to make the necessary modifications in order to fit the students plan to their ability.

Based on the states standards, the IEP team may decide that a student is not eligible for special education. In that instance, recommendations for educational programming in regular education may be developed from the CER. An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives, and the individualized programs and services which the student will receive to aid the student in maximizing their learning. IEPs will be reviewed on an annual basis. Goals are monitored on a continuous basis and reported on in quarterly progress reports. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention. Placement will be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate and possible with children who are not disabled.

In addition to the Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA), IDEA will utilize base line assessments and technology with skill tracking software in core subjects such as math and reading to measure progress on a continuous basis. Our first choice for individual student placement and progress monitoring / tracking is the MAPS Assessment; however there are technological issues that we are attempting to overcome. In the event that we are not able to resolve these issues with NWEA so that we can realistically administer the MAPS <http://www.nwea.org/assessments/map.asp> As students have needs or would benefit we will also use the Brigance so that we have appropriate testing for everyone http://www.brigance.net/br_sys.htm#brigancesystem. For career exploration we will use Coin Career Exploration – for 2nd, 4th, 7th 9th and 11th grades - <http://www.coin3.com/products/default.asp> and will also make use of the PHEAA materials and assessments available through the PA State Education system.

See Attachment: Assessment Grid

Weekly and monthly unit assessments will also give the teachers the ability to monitor progress. Key areas of concern will be the emphasis when progress is slow. Repeated instruction with adaptations for learning styles will be incorporated. Fundamental skill development and maintenance will be strongly emphasized so that students can build on what they learn without getting lost when new concepts are introduced. Paraeducator/paraeducator and touchstone education and training will be a key focus of IDEA as they will be an invaluable resource to monitor student progress and communicate subtle changes in progress. IDEA will establish specific times to in-service paraeducators and touchstones on how to communicate with students and teachers so that the educational experience is rewarding and effective.

In summary, IDEA Cyber Charter School will be an educational system that provides equal access and opportunities for all students. We have designed a program in which on-going reflection of how the program and the people in it, can change to better meet all students' needs by adjusting the learning environments, teaching strategies, positive behavioral supports and technology. We have designed one educational system where special education is a supporting part of education, not a separate system. I.D.E.I.A. is integrated and will be implemented so that everyone is accountable for their role and all IEP's will be implemented, all students will be provide FAPE with appropriate supports and services.

At IDEA Cyber Charter School children come first, and children with disabilities are considered part of "all children" and are considered in all decisions about education. We will continually work to increase our understanding of best practices for people with disabilities and will help our children reach their potential by helping them discover their genius, understand and realize their potential by developing their abilities.

Children with disabilities will be educated with their peers. We have demonstrated and will continue to demonstrate that we understand how inclusion works and how it benefits all children and society. Everyone will work as a team at IDEA. Our design operates around utilization of solution oriented approaches for planning each child's success. At IDEA Cyber Charter School NCLB means no child left behind and no child left out.

Provide a projection of the number and type of special education programs that will be operated directly by your charter school or through contracts.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will incorporate a multitude of related services to our students, including but not limited to: Therapy – OT, PT, Speech, Mobility, Social Skills; co-op experiences in their communities, internships, volunteering, job-shadowing, junior apprenticeships, youth bands, Virtual Family Program, tutoring, Guidance Counseling, and international volunteering/service project opportunities. We have begun to work on partnerships with such groups as Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic (RBD), to provide another layer to both our community organization partnerships and to our ability to provide excellent educational supports for our students. (Our staff, who are good readers, will be encouraged to volunteer with RBD.)

All students in the school will have a learning plan customized to their individual needs to develop in all areas of education. Students who are identified as requiring an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will be encouraged and supported. IEPs developed by the sending district will be reviewed and revised as appropriate to assure the most efficacious and humanizing provision of services and accommodations. Special services required by a student's IEP that are not provided by the school will be provided by the local Intermediate Unit or through contract agencies, fee for service programs, at local hospitals or other health care facilities. These include services such as speech and language services, occupational therapy, physical therapy specialized evaluations, psychological and counseling services, evaluations for assistive technology devices, resource room and special classes, transportation, interpreters, and evaluations for accommodations in the home.

See Attachment: Grading and Graduation

IDEA Cyber Charter School will follow the appropriate procedures specified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). All members of the student's IEP team will be expected to attend annual or emergency IEP team meetings. This will also include the student's regular education teacher to provide input and advocate for the accommodations required to maximize the students learning experience and performance outcomes.

Only individuals with a legitimate educational interest and the paraeducator's written permission will have access to the student's IEP which will be stored in a secure website and in locked file drawers inside of the Special Education Office which will also be secure. Those involved in the student's education, will be responsible for making sure the specifications in the IEP are followed. Paraeducators will be informed in writing, through e-mail, or by phone when goals are met and new goals need to be established. It is expected that those involved in the student's education will keep an open line of communication with paraeducators to monitor minute changes in ability and motivation to participate in school work. Progress will be reported on quarterly progress reports. Each new student with a suspected disability will be evaluated pursuant to applicable Pennsylvania State and Federal laws and regulations.

Teachers and paraeducators will be continuously educated on how to identify indications that may suggest that a student could potentially have special needs. Record keeping and recording will be done in compliance with IDEA and FERPA. All special education teachers working in the school will be certified by the State of Pennsylvania in the area of special education. All special education teachers and services will be overseen by a special education supervisor. The special education supervisor, in collaboration with the Executive Team, will be responsible for staff development in the area of special education. This supervisor and the Executive Team will supervise and maintain student records; provide a projection of the number and type of related services that will be provided directly by the charter school or through contracts and maintain contacts in sufficient number and geographical locations to meet the needs of students.

The IDEA Cyber Charter School, in accordance with I.D.E.I.A. will provide FAPE (free appropriate public education) to school age children with disabilities who need special education and related services. School age children with disabilities who need special education and related services are identified as eligible for special education if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental challenges and disabilities: mental retardation, blind/visual impairment, neurological impairments, multi-handicapped, specific learning disability, autism/pervasive developmental disorder, deafness/hearing impairment, other health impairment, physical disability, speech and language impairment, serious emotional disturbance. In collaboration with the classroom teacher the special education teacher will make adaptations to the general education curriculum.

Publishing companies that focus on meeting the needs of students with learning challenges will be a valuable resource. It is very important to IDEA Cyber Charter School that educational materials are not degrading. For instance, IDEA CCS will not use a 2nd grade text for a student that is in 7th grade. IDEA Cyber Charter will however, use text from a company that is on a 3rd or 4th grade reading level with a focus toward 7th through 12th grade. IDEA Cyber Charter School will offer a number of programs for instructing students with curriculum on a continuous basis. This will insure that the methods of teaching will meet the individual needs of the students. The curriculum will focus on pre requisite and requisite skills to aid the students in meeting the standards for the grade level they are functioning on. Materials used will be focused on self paced and user friendly for paraeducators and students.

The team will continue to seek programs to meet the needs of students as research is constantly evolving. These programs are research based and will be strongly rooted in learning through instructional methods such as direct instruction, repeated reading (emphasizing practice and repetition), phonics, and connecting math concepts. IDEA Cyber School will also have

programs for staff development as well as school and community based education. A school based program called School Wide Disabilities Education Program (SWDEP) will be developed with the oversight from the special education department. In addition to a Community Wide Disabilities Education Program (CWDEP) will be developed. Special education staff will be required to contribute to curriculum development, staff development, and education programming related to disabilities. This will be part of their model of supervision. It will be expected that staff will participate in these programs as part of their annual performance review to demonstrate their devotion to continue to be highly qualified to teach.

Child Find

IDEA Cyber Charter School has established and will implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate school age students suspected of being eligible for special education. These procedures include placement assessments for all students coming into the school, screening activities which include but are not limited to: review of group based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, first, second, and third grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech; and speech and language screening.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. When paraeducators need additional information about the purpose, time and location of screening activities, they will be able to call the special education coordinator.

Evaluation

When a screening indicates that a student may be eligible for special education, the IDEA Cyber Charter School will send a Permission to Evaluate form (PTE) with a SASE to the paraeducator / paraeducator or guardian. An evaluation is necessary to determine if a child has a disability. It will also help establish the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. The evaluation will be conducted by a multi disciplinary team (MDT) which includes a teacher, other qualified professionals who work with the child, and the paraeducators. The multi disciplinary evaluation process will be conducted in accordance with specific time lines set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The multi disciplinary team will comprise a Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. A paraeducator may request a screening of their child at any time if they suspect their child may have challenges that are barriers to learning. Requests for a screening should be made in writing to the Special Education Coordinator. If a paraeducator makes an oral request for a screening, the school will provide the paraeducator with a form. Paraeducators also have the right to obtain an independent education evaluation. IDEA Cyber Charter School will provide the requesting paraeducator information for locating an independent educational evaluator. Under certain circumstances, such an independent educational evaluation may be obtained at public expense.

Evaluation/Placement Procedures--The ADA does not specify evaluation and placement procedures; it does specify provision of reasonable accommodations for eligible students across educational activities and settings. Reasonable accommodations may include, but are not

limited to, redesigning equipment, assigning aides, providing written communication in alternative formats, modifying tests, redesigning services to accessible locations, altering existing facilities, and building new facilities.

C. Describe the teaching methods that will be used to deliver instruction and assess academic performance. How will this pedagogy enhance student learning?

The IDEA Cyber Charter School will, in all ways comply with the IDEA 1997 to provide FAPE (free appropriate public education) to school age children with disabilities who need special education and related services. All students at IDEA will benefit from the pedagogies that drive our teaching methodologies. Understanding by Design is especially ideal for students with IEPs as teachers seek to understand how student's learn, what excites them, what makes them want to learn more. Adding to UbD is Constructivism which gives our teachers the foundations for finding the ways that our students like to learn and how they like to produce the product of their learning. Third, we are also using Differentiated Instruction (DI) again enhancing our commitment to customize each student's plan of instruction (CPI's). There will be far less public distinction between our students with and those without IEPs. To enhance all these pedagogies we are teaching and incorporating appreciation for diversity and embracing diversity – which of course will include appreciation of all the things that make us different – skin color and culture, appearance, the ways we learn, how fast we learn and what we are capable of learning.

We hold strongly to the power of inclusion in the context of the above paragraph. Every child/student has many wonderful things to give and as we combine students to work together and provide the support that each student needs to flash their genius and the support that each student needs to appreciate each other's genius our students will produce amazing products of learning that will astound and amaze all who have the privilege of observing them!

In addition, a curriculum team has been established make adaptations to the general education curriculum. Publishing companies that focus on meeting the needs of students with learning challenges are being utilized. It is very important to IDEA Cyber School that the material is not degrading. For instance, IDEA will not use a 2nd grade text for a student that is in 7th grade. IDEA Cyber Charter School will however, use text from a company that is on a 3rd or 4th grade reading level with a focus toward 7th through 12th grade.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will offer a number of programs for instructing students with curriculum on a continuous basis. This will insure that the methods of teaching will meet the individual needs of the students. The curriculum will focus on prerequisite and requisite skills to aid the students in meeting the standards for the grade level they are functioning on. Materials used will be focused on self paced and user friendly for paraeducators and students. The team will continue to seek programs to meet the needs of students as research is constantly evolving. These programs will have a strong research base and will be strongly rooted in learning through instructional methods such as direct instruction, repeated reading (emphasizing practice and repetition), phonics, and connecting math concepts.

IDEA Cyber School will also have programs for staff development as well as school and community based education. A school based program called School Wide Disabilities

Education Program (SWDEP) will be developed with the oversight from the special education department. In addition to a Community Wide Disabilities Education Program (CWDEP) will be developed. Special education staff will be required to contribute to curriculum development, staff development, and education programming related to disabilities. This will be part of their model of supervision. It will be expected that staff will participate in these programs as part of their annual performance review to demonstrate their devotion to continue to be highly qualified to teach.

Assessment of the efficacy of the special education program in general and specific to each student will be drawn from objective student data that is collected, evaluated and interpreted in conjunction with and in light of student and paraeducator, teacher and touchstone evaluations of the materials used, the programs offered and the motivation to learn that it stimulates individually and collectively.

This pedagogy will enhance student learning as students are engaged in their educational opportunities, implementation of their ideas and life goals into the content of their curriculum and as they are supported in discovering their own genius and seeing their value to their world. Learning, the meaning and purpose of life will evolve so that they see connections between their choices and the effort that they extend to accomplish their choices directly affects their personal successes. The portfolios of their goals and accomplishments will serve as ongoing reminders that they are capable, worthwhile people who have value to add to their world. They will also develop as sense of being appreciated as they are celebrated for their accomplishments with awards, certificates and recognition in the school community.

3. Educational Program:

C. Describe the teaching methods that will be used to deliver instruction and assess academic performance. How will this pedagogy enhance student learning?

IDEA will use teaching methods that promote an enhanced quality of learning by ensuring the delivery of high quality instruction and meaningful assessment of academic performance. IDEA instruction is individualized; this approach will enhance student learning by giving students real time, relevant, and meaningful student-teacher relationships. The academic technologies used including asynchronous and synchronous communication allow teachers to engage in one on one and one on many teaching. For instance, the use of Elluminate allows a teacher to communicate with the entire class while also providing the opportunity for students to revisit a class, or attend a class they missed, again enhancing their learning because they will not miss opportunities for learning. Because the vast majority of student teacher interactions will take place via asynchronous or synchronous computer aided interaction, IDEA will have the ability to assess teacher performance quickly and frequently.

Following a Constructivist (learning by creating) Model of guided student learning (UbD, 7 Habits, Moral Intelligence and Love and Logic) lesson construction will incorporate teamwork, hands on, cooperative learning, interpersonal communicating, problem solving, trouble shooting, communicating what students have learned with others (team members, peers) emphasizing

leadership skills, being a responsible citizen /contributor in your family, school, community, country and world. Being actively involved in how they learn each new skill, and recognizing strengths and qualities in others, students who are otherwise unlikely leaders can emerge as leaders because of a particular strength and later because of their skill-based experiences. Students are consequently able to transfer leadership from one area to another. Because students are given the opportunity to be engaged in learning and leadership, they are actually able to become leaders.

In the Constructivism view of education, children have hands-on experiences in their learning and have a direct influence over how they learn. Teachers who encourage children in learning and foster leadership, foster improvement on all assessments including standardized achievement tests. Likewise, this more meaningful and transferable learning will result when students are given opportunities to construct knowledge from their own point of view.

Constructivist teaching might ask students to predict and test their own theories. Students are involved in the creation of their own artifacts and representations – the products of their labors. As learners advance they will be responsible for recognizing and evaluating patterns of information and then organizing them, thereby demonstrating what they have learned. Students will work with peers or individually on constructivist projects, the length of which can vary from a week to a semester. This learning environment stresses higher order thinking skills and process understanding over complex content testing and will require modifications and more or less intensive teaching assistance depending on each student's learning curve.

Students will utilize their prior experiences and learned knowledge and might use such things as templates to create projects. They can also do background research prior to collaborating with others, developing their questions and collecting and organizing topic-related-data from such resources as maps, books, websites, CD's, videos or journals.

Another important conceptual component of Constructivism is the scaffolding process. Students will organize the information they collect because the process of locating and making sense of information is key to their learning experience. Instructor or peer scaffolding (i.e. effective strategies, concepts to focus on) may be included in their design.

Based on outcomes in other learning environments, we anticipate that using Constructivist models, IDEA students will develop an understanding that information is not fact but subject to interpretation, evaluation and verification. Students will develop collaboration skills, presentation skills, technical skills and production skills. We expect to see increased motivation, interest, enthusiasm, and pride of ownership in products (which can include flowcharting, storyboarding and power points). Work is shared with peers and teachers throughout the process; therefore there will be early identification of student misconceptions as well as easy authentication of student work. This will lead to revision, better products and improved understanding of concepts. The collection, adaptation, and utilization of materials in the application promote higher level cognitive skills such as evaluation from multiple levels and perspectives. Evaluation of their own work, teacher and peer evaluation and/or professional critique of an expert), analysis, and, ultimately, synthesis along with increased understanding of relationships of each with the other are all a part of the Constructivist model.

Constructivist assessments focus on how well students apply the knowledge they acquire during the course. Rubrics with criteria for expected performance will be distributed, or developed with the students prior to a project, as assessment guidelines for students to follow.

During the process of learning, touchstones empower students to be able to communicate needs; letting them know that it's okay, good even, to make mistakes and rethink how they are interpreting the information they are processing. When the environment is safe and mistakes are welcomed as part of the learning process, students are free to experiment, test their theories and ideas and subsequently learn in ways that make knowledge their possessions.

The entire design of IDEA Cyber Charter School will incorporate 12 Ways to help children to like themselves, (Learning to Teach, Linda Shalway – National PTA) build relationships and trust and Faye's Four Basic Needs of Students:

- Be available and give children support whenever they need it.
- Set reasonable expectations for students and respect their limitations and strengths.
- Help students to value each other, including those with obvious differences.
- Problems will be addressed without disqualifying a child's character.
- Show our students that what they do is important to us; talking to them about their activities and interests.
- We will take their feelings, emotions and ideas seriously and not belittle them with patronizing clichés.
- We will give students manageable responsibilities that will make them feel useful and valued.
- Use affirming statements to express appreciation and support for their ideas and contributions.
- Inclusion – helping all students feel a part of the IDEA family
- Control – by facilitating and initiating opportunities to have a sense of control over the decisions that affect their lives.
- Affection – by taking every opportunity to show students they are cared for, appreciated, respected and loveable/likeable.
- Competency by setting academic and other goals that students believe they are capable of meeting at least 70-80% of the time.

We will build a strong foundation of relationships and trust by providing open access to our teachers and administrators through telephone contact, email, chat rooms, and face-to-face meetings with students and families. We will provide continual monitoring and feedback regarding student work to paraeducators, students and teachers, creating a bond of mutual responsibility and support for their ultimate success.

Consistent with our foundational philosophies based on Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Fay's Love and Logic and Borba's Moral Intelligence (which lay the foundation of beginning with the end in mind, having a plan, assessing, sharpening the saw, taking responsibility for their choices, actions and behaviors and empathy so that they can grow with their peers and develop healthy relationships in every area of their lives) IDEA has wedded Understanding by Design (UbD), Constructivism and Differentiated Instruction. These pedagogies lend perfectly to customized plans of instruction (CPI's) which are based on the standardized testing, interest inventories, aptitude assessments and interviews at the Placement Clusters.

There will also be several resources for assessing academic performance. Having a baseline to begin with from the NWEA Testing, teachers will be able to chart progress. When a student is not progressing, the NWEA assessments can be given at the end of a quarter to better pinpoint

where the current issues are and to provide clear directions for correcting the deficits. Teacher observation of students' quality of work will be a regular and consistent measure of their students' learning. Regular, ongoing and consistent teacher/ student/ paraeducator communication with paraeducator assessments of their children's academic progress or lack thereof will not only provide the most accurate, up to date evaluations of students needs, strengths and weaknesses, but will keep the paraeducator involved and in the motivational place of leadership that they deserve. It is undisputed that when parents are empowered and involved in their children's education the children do better.

Using these pedagogical foundations, teachers will be able to design wonderfully innovative methods of teaching so that students can have relevant and engaging educational opportunities and experiences. Students participate in the design of their curriculum and are being taught to take an active role in their educational process along with taking responsibility for their choices, their achievements and their progress. They will be the beneficiaries of many innovative learning opportunities.

One of the innovative methods of learning which IDEA will offer its students will be the Learning Activities Programs (LAPS). LAPS will offer multiple formats through which students will be able to demonstrate mastery of concepts. For each major concept, assignments will be developed in multiple formats that enable students to choose different assignment formats for different concepts. Some possible assignment formats would be an artistic assignment such as a poster, or collage; a memorization format like spelling words or basic computation assignments; a written format such as an essay or paper; and a testing format such as multiple choice or open-ended questions. LAPS would include multiple concepts. Students will be instructed that they may choose a preferred assignment method for each concept in the LAP with the provision that they complete a minimum number of each type of assignment formats to ensure that they vary their methods of demonstrating concept mastery.

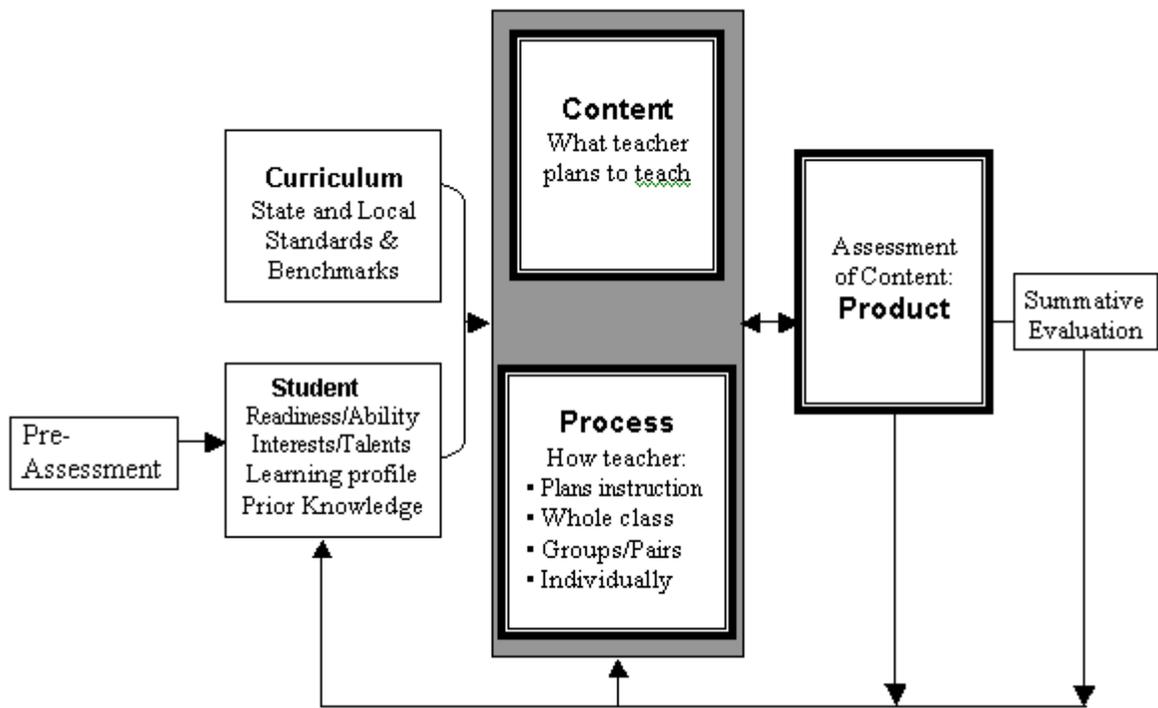
Educators and learners alike recognize that everyone learns differently. Students come into public schools with diverse backgrounds, diverse experiences, diverse exposure to academics, their own unique style of learning along with interests and goals that are distinctively theirs. In our determination to value every child and nurture them so that each is able to develop their genius and shine brightly, the founders of IDEA have brought together their collective experiences, training and observations. Using Understanding by Design as the foundational pedagogy, we have developed an educational program of diversified instruction where students will have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas and presenting the products of their learning. In the professional literature, this is referred to as Diversified Instruction – about which there is a plethora of instruction. It is important to note that at IDEA, we believe in individualized diversified instruction and not in placing students in diversified groups according to their abilities. Such a grouping approach is the opposite of inclusion and runs completely counter to the foundational beliefs of IDEA.

Learning Activities Programs (LAPS) are one application of diversified instruction about which there is a plethora of research, including research to support the effectiveness of its use with Understanding by Design. In their book, *Integrating Differentiated Instruction with Understanding by Design*, Carol Ann Tomlison and Jay McTighe acknowledge what many in the field of education are viewing as potentially impoverishing for both teachers and students. They propose that what is needed is “a model that acknowledges the centrality of standards

(and) ...demonstrates how meaning and understanding” can be both frame and outcome for learners to accumulate an information base and “powers of mind”. Combine these needs with an increasingly diverse classroom population and it becomes clear that the traditional methods have become inadequate alone.

Tracey Hall, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist at NCAC defines differentiated instruction (DI) as an approach to teaching and learning whereby students have multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas. Using this method, it is teachers who must accommodate to students rather than requiring the learners to not only take in new information at a standard rate and do that as they accommodate the curriculum, style, speed and content imposed on them regardless of their academic level, ability, or how they learn. There are few places where these things vary as much as in a cyber school where any given class will include students from every part of the state geographically, widely varying educational experiences, abilities, opportunities, socio-economic backgrounds, parents educational backgrounds and levels, from urban, suburban, small town and rural. It is not necessary to keep everyone in a cyber classroom in the same place to prevent pandemonium as they are already in different physical locations. Therefore, the cyber classroom lends itself perfectly to differentiated instruction where instructional approaches can be naturally varied and adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms. The intent of DI is to maximize student learning, growth and success by meeting them where they are and supporting them in the learning process.

(a) Learning Cycle and Decision Factors Used in Planning and Implementing Differentiated Instruction



(adapted from Oakford, L. & Jones, L., 2001)

From the literature (Oaksford and Jones, Tomlison), several key elements guide differentiation in the educational environment. Tomlison suggests three elements of curriculum are appropriate for DI, and they are content, process and products. Each area can be done naturally in a cyber environment without creating confusion and without creating an artificial caste-type of system or hierarchy.

Differentiated instruction is accomplished by the use of a variety of elements and materials used to support instructional content giving tasks with objectives that are aligned to the learning goals. Instructional concepts are broad based and are the same for all students; focusing on concepts, principles and skills that students will learn. The concepts are adjusted by degree of complexity for the diversity of learners in the classroom. Students then bring what they are learning to the cyber classroom discussions so that they are learning from each other, their paraeducators as well as the teachers.

This approach to Differentiated Instruction is supported by the established assessment plans (NWEA, COIN, Renzulli) which will begin during the placement process after a student is enrolled and then as often as needed or helpful to the student up to four times a year for NWEA. These assessments will give us our starting place and a kind of moving picture over time when combined with formal and informal teacher and paraeducator assessment of student progress, student engagement and participation. These data will give us what we need to assess our instruction, curriculum and academic program for student readiness and growth. These in turn will also provide information and direction regarding the next phase for successful differentiation with a menu of approaches, choices and scaffolds for the varying needs, interests and abilities of our students. At IDEA students are responsible, engaged explorers and learners and can expect that teachers will provide them with interesting, engaging, challenging opportunities for learning and understanding new skills. Students will produce age appropriate, well designed product that demonstrates their particular genius using varied means of expression at the level of difficulty appropriate for them. Evaluation and scoring will take these things into account, bearing in mind student capabilities and progress, as well as criteria for scoring provided in a rubric when the LAPS or other DI is given. Instructions will clarify key concepts and generalizations to ensure that all learners develop a potent understanding serving as a foundation on which to build future learning.

Creative and critical thinking goals will incorporate tasks, activities and procedures that require students to understand and apply meaning. Creative supports, motivational opportunities, varied assignments, appropriate materials, equipment or technology may be necessary to provide optimal benefits to students.

IDEA students will be engaged as participants in design through implementation of their learning experiences with motivation and encouragement provided by teachers, paraeducators, touchstones, tutors and others who are involved. These features along with varying tasks within instruction and across students for structure and activity will have additional benefits of contributing to authentication of student work.

Working in teams, IDEA teachers will provide a balance between teacher and student contribution to the tasks so that each student is receiving a customized plan of instruction,

IDEA students along with their paraeducators will consistently have choices with regard to their learning.

B. Efficacy

Differentiated Instruction is an assemblage of several theories and practices. It stems from the writings of Lev Vygotsky (1978), Fisher, et al (1980) and Fisher, 1980 in Tomlinson, 2000). Other teaching methodologies rooted in Differentiated Instruction have been validated in the research from the mid 19080's to the present of effective teaching, management, student grouping and engaging learners (Worthington, 1994). Based on this literature review of differentiated instruction, it is short on empirical validation.

There is an acknowledged and decided gap in the literature in this area and future research is warranted. The administration and faculty of IDEA Cyber Charter School will form the foundations and gather the data to conduct research with publish-worthy studies.

While there is a shortage of published scholarly empirical validation of differentiated instruction, there are many teacher reports and classroom examples in several publications and on multiple web sites that describe differentiated instruction. [Specific examples cited in the "Reference" section] Tomlinson reports individual cases of settings in which the full model of differentiation was very promising. Teachers using differentiation have written about improvements in their classrooms. [See below.]

Classical History and Evolution of Differentiated Instruction

Originally, DI was used with a focus on gifted students or students who were not quite challenged enough by the curriculum being used in the general classroom. As classrooms have become more diverse with the introduction of inclusion of students with disabilities, and the reality of diversity in public schools, differentiated instruction has been applied at all levels for students of all abilities. Teachers who work together to share the creative load have the greatest success, a perfect fit for IDEA teachers where all courses are team taught and as enough students enroll, most courses will have two teams of teachers.

Additional research regarding differentiated instruction is needed to empirically assess its authentic value and contributions to understanding how best to structure and deliver our pedagogy to a diverse population of students in a cyber environment. Because IDEA has structured everything related to student education from initial assessments for appropriate placement to assessment of student progress and assessment of teacher effectiveness and the effectiveness of the school in parts and in the whole, it is a perfect setting to contribute to the data and empirical literature regarding Differentiated Instruction. It is also an ideal setting to contribute to the creative literature of applications of Differentiated Instruction, particularly in the cyber education environment.

Differentiated Instruction Links (Taken directly from Hall, T. (2002). *Differentiated instruction*. Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum. Retrieved [04/09/2007] from http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html).

Guild, P.B., and Garger, S (1998). What Is Differentiated Instruction? *Marching to Different Drummers* 2nd Ed. (ASCD, p.2)

<http://www.ascd.org/pdi/demo/diffinstr/differentiated1.html>

Initially published in 1985, *Marching to Different Drummers* was one of the first sources to pull together information on what was a newly-flourishing topic in education. Part I defines style and looks at the history of style research; Part II describes applications of style in seven areas; Part III identifies common questions and discusses implementation and staff development.

Tomlinson, C.A., (2000). Differentiation of instruction in the elementary grades. ERIC Digest. ERIC_NO: ED443572.

<http://ericir.syr.edu/plweb-cgi/obtain.pl>

To meet the needs of diverse student populations, many teachers differentiate instruction. This digest describes differentiated instruction, discusses the reasons for differentiated instruction, what makes it successful, and suggests how teachers may begin implementation.

Tomlinson, C.A., (1995). Differentiating instruction for advanced learners in the mixed-ability middle school classroom. ERIC Digest E536.

http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed389141.html

The ability to differentiate instruction for middle school aged learners is a challenge. Responding to the diverse students needs found in inclusive, mixed-ability classrooms is particularly difficult. This digest provides an overview of some key principles for differentiating instruction, with an emphasis on the learning needs of academically advanced students.

Tomlinson, C.A., & Allan, S. D., (2000). Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/tonlinson00book.html>

This Web site contains two chapters from Tomlinson's recent publication: *Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. This book is designed for those in leadership positions to learn about differentiated instruction.

Web Article: Mapping a route toward differentiated instruction.

<http://www.ascd.org/pdi/demo/diffinstr/tomlinson2.html>

Carol Ann Tomlinson, an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, Foundations and Policy at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA provides an article entitled; Mapping a route toward differentiated instruction. *Educational Leadership*, 57,1.

Willis, S. & Mann, L., (2000). Differentiating instruction: Finding manageable ways to meet individual needs (Excerpt). Curriculum Update.
<http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/cupdate/200/1win.html>

Based on the concept that “one size does not fit all” the authors describe the teaching philosophy of differentiated instruction. More teachers are determined to reach all learners, to challenge students who may be identified as gifted as well as students who lag behind grade level. This article excerpt describes the essential components of differentiated instruction beginning with three aspects of curriculum: content, process and products.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Web site
www.ascd.org/pdi/demo/diffinstr/differentiated1.html

A site by ASCD (2000) which discusses differentiated instruction. Page links to other pages with examples from a high school* and elementary school*, key characteristics of a differentiated classroom, benefits, related readings, discussion, and related links to explore.
*might be good to look at for case story ideas

Educational Leadership Research Link
www.ascd.org/readingroom/edlead/0009/holloway.html

This Web site, provided by Educational Leadership, links the reader to a brief summary of an article by Holloway. The author has provided a bulleted summary regarding the principles and theories that drive differentiated instruction.

Holloway, J.H., (2000). Preparing Teachers for Differentiated Instruction. Educational Leadership, 58 (1).
<http://web.uvic.ca/~jdurkin/edd401su/Differentiated.html>

This site is from an education course by Dr. John Durkin. It includes a diagram with suggestions for approaches to differentiated instruction. It also includes a listing of what differentiated instruction is and is not, rules of thumb on how to instruct, and management strategies.

Theroux, P. (2001). Enhance Learning with Technology. Differential Instruction.
www.cssd.ab.ca/tech/oth/learn/differentiating.htm

Theroux provides a thorough site on differential instruction for a Canadian school district. Provides links to teacher attitudes, learning strategies, teacher resources, integrating technology, integrating outcomes, exploring projects, sample lesson plans*, planning projects, thinking skills, developing Web pages, assessing, and tutorials.

Web Site: for Teachers, Administrators, and Higher Education
www.teach-nology.com/litined/dif_instruction/

This web site is designed for educators and uses technology to inform teachers about current practices, literature, the law in education, as well as professional development.

Additionally, links to articles including research on educational practices including links to information on differentiated instruction are included.

REFERENCES

Ellis, E. S. and Worthington, L. A. (1994). *Research synthesis on effective teaching principles and the design of quality tools for educators.* University of Oregon: Technical Report No. 5 National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators.

Effective teaching and by extension effective learning has been a focus of both current and historical and educational reform movements. With a focus on quality teaching, the authors have reviewed and consolidated empirically supported effective teaching principles derived from research and identified 10 principles that characterize what we know about effective teaching.

Oaksford, L. & Jones, L., 2001. Differentiated instruction abstract. Tallahassee, FL: Leon County Schools.

The authors are teachers in the Leon County Schools in Florida. They have written a summary about the implementation of Differentiated Instruction in their schools. They emphasize the importance of content, process and product when executing these practices. With other teachers and administrators in the district, they developed an implementation guide and obtained professional development seminars to put differentiated instruction in place in their schools.

Pettig, K. L., (2000). On the road to differentiated. *Education Leadership*, 8, 1, 14-18.

The author offers advice and input about implementation of differentiated instruction. A school district Coordinator in New York State, Pettig provides practical and practiced strategies for teachers and schools considering adopting the principles of differentiated instruction. This district had five years of experience with differentiated instruction when the article was written.

Reis, S. M., Kaplan, S. N, Tomlinson, C. A., Westbert, K.L, Callahan, C. M., & Cooper, C. R., (1998). How the brain learns, a response: Equal does not mean identical. *Educational Leadership*, 56, 3.

The authors provide a response to an Educational Leadership article from March of 1998, in which the concept of de-tracking is introduced as a solution to high-academic standards for high school students. These authors put forth a compelling argument to raise student achievement. Students with different abilities, interests, and levels of motivation should be offered differentiated instruction that meets their individual needs

Sizer, T. R. (2001). No two are quite alike: Personalized learning. *Educational Leadership* 57 (1).

In this article, Sizer presents the rationale and logistics of “personalizing” instruction to meet the needs of students in classrooms of today. He addresses the leadership needs to personalize instruction and facing the concept knowing that adaptations to personalize or differentiate instruction will be in continual flux.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms.* (2nd Ed.) Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Carol Ann Tomlinson has developed this 14-chapter text to define and describe Differentiated Instruction. Tomlinson suggests that it is feasible to prepare teachers to address the wide diversity of students in today’s classrooms along with the realities of curricula and standards imposed on schools. She believes that there is room for both equity and excellence in classrooms and to teach well, teachers should attend to individual differences.

Tomlinson, C.A., & Allan, S. D. (2000). *Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

The authors show how school leaders can encourage and support growth in classrooms. Information is provided and explanations are provided on how school leaders can support the development of responsive, personalized, and differentiated classrooms. Tomlinson and Allan illustrate how school administrators and leaders can encourage and support differentiated instruction for the diversity of students in our classrooms today.

Hall, T. (2002). *Differentiated instruction.* Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum. Retrieved [04/09/2007] from http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html

Tomlinson, Carol Ann and McTighe, Jay, *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006 <http://www.ascd.org>

The LAPS method of offering assignments will allow students to display mastery of concepts in the medium in which they are most comfortable to increase their level of success and confidence while encouraging them to expand their abilities by trying new forms of presentation. The high level of choice and control of their education will help to keep students involved and actively participating in their own education.

LAPS are consistent with IDEA’s mission of individualizing education to enhance student success. Teachers have the ability to design the required quantity of assignment formats to help students to continue to develop new skills and confidence.

D. Attach the school calendar and identify hours of the school operation, as per section 1715-A(9).

Explanation: Describe effective teaching methods, curriculum, and a specific plan to meet the needs of ALL students that are consistent with the mission of your school.

Attachment: Calendar for SY 2008-09

IDEA Cyber Charter School will operate year round (12 months). With July 1, 2008 as the first day of school for students who will choose the 180 or more days during which they attend school. Students and their families will be free to not attend school on their sacred or important family holidays and may attend on the holidays of others that they do not keep. The school portal will be open but teachers will not be teaching on weekends and National Holidays as noted on the IDEA School Calendar. Students can take their birthdays off and still attend at least 180 days of school every year.

4. School Accountability:

- A. What methods of self-assessment or evaluation will be used to ensure that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives?

The Founders of IDEA have built in several methodologies for ensuring that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives:

1. National, standardized testing (NWEA) will be administered to every student enrolling in the school so that we have an empirical baseline from which to begin.
2. Because we are including our Paraeducators in all areas of the professional education (planning, training, evaluation and interpretation of their children's outcomes) they will be valuable gauges of our effectiveness in teaching their children.
3. Parents/paraeducators and students will be strongly encouraged to complete Evaluative surveys at the end of each marking period and these will be used to address all issues that arise from them.
4. Staff evaluations include a section with opportunities to evaluate the school for efficacy, efficiency, strengths, weaknesses and areas that need improvement.
5. At the staff retreat, workshops and round tables will be held to assess and evaluate the school at the end of the year.
6. Planning for the coming year will also be a significant part of the Staff Retreat at which time staff will discuss, select the best plans and then plan for implementation of the plans for ongoing school improvement, development and progress.
7. PDE Assessment tools and other assessment tools will be used to annually evaluate every person for performance of their job and re-evaluation of their positions for appropriateness of their job description and compensation for the work they are actually performing.
8. Paraeducators/Parents, students, teachers, touchstones, teaching assistants and all other staff will be provided with a survey and encouraged with multiple motivational artifacts, to complete it before the Annual Staff Retreat at the end of June. All surveys will be anonymously submitted unless the individual completing it chooses to make him or herself known.
9. These evaluation and assessment tools, along with data gathered regarding student achievements and assessment testing, will be thoroughly evaluated, assessed and interpreted to find strengths and weaknesses. Plans will be developed to broaden and generalize the strengths and to remediate the

weaknesses using annual measurable goal setting for the upcoming year for every department, every program and curriculum. Each year as goals are achieved new goals will be set to effect ongoing, over all school improvement.

B. How will teachers and administrators be evaluated? Describe your standards for teacher and staff performance.

IDEA Cyber Charter School teachers will be evaluated semi-annually using the revised PDE teacher evaluation forms which reflect the highly respected work of Charlotte Danielson. The PDE forms focus on teacher performance through planning and preparation of instruction, maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning, delivering instruction effectively, and contributing to the professional development of teaching. IDEA Cyber Charter School will use the new PDE forms to evaluate teachers who are recommended to move from Level I to Level II certification. IDEA will be in a good position to complete the teacher evaluation forms because of the excellent visibility IDEA has into its teachers' performance. This visibility is created by accessing the synchronous and asynchronous teacher student interactions captured on Blackboard and Elluminate. Part of the evaluation process will also be rewarding teacher's extraordinary work as we evaluate their online work. Every week, each member of the Executive Team will recognize something extraordinary about a teacher. This acknowledgement will go on the school site and the teacher/staff will receive a certificate of appreciation, a copy of which will be placed in their permanent record.

The IDEA Cyber Charter School Executive Team plans to develop and implement other forms/criteria and continuums to use in the evaluation process of each other. IDEA Cyber Charter School teachers will be guided to show multiple and diverse efforts which motivate students faculty and staff towards higher standards and continuous improvement.

Teacher performance evaluation standards and criteria will include his/her ability to

- demonstrate knowledge of content and pedagogy
- demonstrate knowledge of students
- select appropriate instructional goals
- demonstrate knowledge of resources
- design coherent instruction
- assess student learning
- create an environment of respect and rapport
- establish a culture for learning
- manage instruction procedures
- implement student behavior expectations, including monitoring procedures and effective responses
- communicate clearly and accurately with students, faculty and staff
- use effective questioning and discussion techniques
- engage students in learning
- provide feedback to students
- demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness
- reflect on teaching

- maintain accurate records
- communicate with families
- contribute to promote a meaningful school environment
- grow and develop professionally

Teacher artifacts should be collected by all teaching staff. Artifacts will be used as part of evaluation alternatives. The collection of artifacts is not to be a showcase portfolio, but rather serve as a point for discussion between the teacher and administrator. The artifacts will be included in a teacher's personnel file. Some sample artifacts would be lesson plans, student work samples, student surveys, or even a log of paraeducator contacts. This information will serve as a reference to the Executive team at review time each year. This will also give the Executive team the necessary information to create effectively paired teachers for team teaching based on strengths and weaknesses in each team member.

See: Attachment: Teacher Evaluation PDE 426 and PDE 426A
 Attachment: Teacher Evaluation PDE 427 and PDE 427A
 Attachment: Teacher Evaluation PDE 428 and PDE 428A
 Attachment: Executive Director / Executive Principal Evaluation Form

IDEA will provide ongoing learning opportunities for all staff. Trainings will be relevant to the goals, objectives and mission of IDEA Cyber Charter School and will be implemented with the support of the Executive Team.

The professional evaluation process will be established in a professional development calendar. IDEA will utilize need-based professional development, multiple approaches that enable staff to enhance their proficiency and measured comprehensive understanding of content. The professional development process will evaluate the relationship between what students have and have not learned well *and* what the teaching staff needs to develop. The Executive Team will seek regular staff feedback of impact on practice.

- The Board of Directors will evaluate the members of the Executive Team. The Executive Team will evaluate teaching staff, touchstones, directors, and administrative support staff and, depending on geographic locations, will participate in the evaluation of other departmental staff in collaboration with their directors

C. How will your school be accountable to the parents of the children attending your school?

IDEA Cyber Charter School recognizes the important and pivotal role played by parents/paraeducators in the educational success of their students and IDEA Founders believe that teachers and staff must be accountable to them. IDEA believes that a fundamental part of accountability is communication and will provide relevant information in a weekly report, customized for each individual student. Parents will also be given contact information for teachers, counselors, touchstones and the Executive Team. At the end of each grading period, we will solicit input via an online survey from students, parents and paraeducators about their experience in the previous grading period. IDEA is committed to addressing concerns raised by parents about our educational materials, technology and our problem solving effectiveness.

IDEA will develop a seven member Parents' Council made up of two parents of elementary students, two from middle school parents, and three from high school. The council will meet regularly to discuss IDEA parent issues and will report on such issues to the Executive Team in a quarterly teleconference. If any issues arise that require immediate action, this Council will have ready access to the Executive Team at any time. The Chairperson will give a quarterly report to the Board of Directors.

D. Discuss your plan for regular review of school budgets and financial records.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will contract with Goldflam and Associates and Richard M. Jones, CPA of Kendall, Prebola and Jones, CPAs for assistance with financial management and audits

. The Director of Finance, working closely with the Executive Team will furnish the following financial documents and statements to the Board of Directors on a monthly basis:

Name these documents:

The Treasurer will present these statements to the Board at the monthly meetings, and the Board will review these monthly statements to determine (taking into consideration recommendations of the external management organization) if any changes need to be made to the then-current Approved Operating Budget.

The IDEA charter school will submit to all financial audits and comply with all required audit procedures, including an annual audit by the Pennsylvania Department of Education Comptroller's Office. Specifically:

- **Annual independent financial audit:** IDEA CS will be audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm according to the same guidelines applicable to public school systems in Pennsylvania. The cost of the independent audit shall be borne by IDEA Cyber Charter School. Copies of the audit will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education within 180 days of the end of the fiscal year.
- **Annual report/program audit:** At an agreed-upon number of days after the end of each school year, IDEA CS will submit a report prepared by an independent certified public accountant which attests to: a) the accuracy, validity and reasonableness of academic achievement and programmatic results reported by IDEA CS to the Pennsylvania Department of Education; and b) IDEA CS' compliance with the provisions of the charter. This performance information will be used in assessing any renewal option for the charter.

E. Describe your system for maintaining school records and disseminating information as required under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

Describe your system for maintaining school records and disseminating information as required under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

IDEA Cyber Charter School will protect, secure and maintain the security and privacy of all student records. Student educational records that are kept in hard copies will be maintained in a locked file room in locked file cabinets. Student information kept electronically in Blackboard/Provost will be restricted and available only to staff with a “need to know” status. Only select administrative and academic staff with need to know will have access to the records. Everyone entering a student record will sign in and will therefore be recorded as having accessed a particular student’s records.

Parents and students will have the right to access their children's or their education records; an opportunity to seek to have the records amended; and some control over the disclosure of information from the records. Parents will have the right to access, seek to amend or consent to disclosures of their children’s educational records except when the school either has in its possession or has been provided information by appropriate authorities that a court order exists denying same.

Upon the event of a student’s 18th birthday or when a student is attending a post-secondary institution of higher learning, the student (not the parent) will be granted access, the right to amend and consent to disclosures of their educational records.

Access to Education Records

In compliance with FERPA, Parents and students of IDEA Cyber Charter School will have access to view their child’s/their educational records upon written request (forms will also be provided by Student Services). Parents can also request a copy of their child’s records in writing and one will be sent within 30 days. A free copy will be provided on the first request; after which the requesting party will need to pay the cost of copying (\$0.15/page). Any information pertaining to any student other than the student of record will be redacted.

Parent’s requests for corrections will be taken very seriously. At the very least the parent’s statement will be entered into the student’s record indicating the parent’s corrected understanding or perspective on a record perceived to be inaccurate. If this is deemed less than acceptable by the parent they will be offered the choice of a hearing to amend the records. If the hearing does not result in an amendment of the records, the parents will again be offered the opportunity to place a written statement that will be both kept in the record and will be disclosed with educational records except in the following situations:

- a) When a parent or student is seeking to change a grade or disciplinary decision.
- b) When the parent or student is seeking to change the opinions or reflections of a school official or other person reflected in an education record.
- c) When a parent or student is seeking to change a determination with respect to a student’s status in special education programs.

Disclosure of Education Records

In compliance with FERPA, IDEA Charter School will:

- Require written, dated, signed parental consent stating the purpose of the disclosure before disclosure of student education records;
- Ensure that the consent is signed and dated and states the purpose of the disclosure.

See Attachment:

Disclosure of Education Records Without Parental Consent

IDEA Cyber Charter School will disclose student records without parental consent in the following situations:

1. When there is confirmation that the request has been appropriately issued by a legitimate school district whereby necessary educational interests are clearly indicated;
2. When a student is in the process of withdrawing from IDEA and seeking to enroll in another school.
3. When the disclosure is to state or local educational authorities auditing or evaluating Federal or State supported education programs or enforcing Federal laws which relate to those programs;
4. When the disclosure is pursuant to a lawfully issued court order or subpoena.

Annual Notification

IDEA Cyber Charter School will post on the school portal on the Report Card page and send out with final report cards, notification that with regard to their children’s education records, parents have the right to:

1. Access and review their children’s educational records;
2. Request correction of inaccurate or misleading information;
3. Consent to appropriate disclosures of personally identifiable information;

Parents will also be notified that they may file a complaint with all the requisite information for filing a complaint of alleged violation with the FPCO. They will be provided with the description of a school official and what is considered to be a legitimate educational interest so that parents know with whom they can share information and seek access to or amendment of education records.

The above Annual Notification will be included in the Student Handbook and will be included in a Paraeducators and Students Rights Page on the IDEA Cyber Charter School Portal.

Post this Annual Notification on the school site

- F. Describe your system for maintaining accurate student enrollment and withdrawal information as required under section 1748-A, Enrollment and Notification.

IDEA Cyber Charter School is committed to integrity at every level and to maintaining accurate, authentic records of enrollment.

- PDE-40262C Annual Attendance Membership Report
- PDE-4002CS Summary Report of Aggregate Days Membership
- PDE District Enrollment Notification Form
- PDE District Enrollment Notification Form
- PDE-4059CS AVTS “Instructional Time Summary” is designed to

report instructional time data for students enrolled in charter schools IDEA recognizes and acknowledges the importance of child accounting, as charter school funding is enrollment based. IDEA's accounting department will access and use these forms.

Student Services and the Accounting Department will work closely together to communicate student enrollments and withdrawals. Notification to school districts of origin of students will be a top priority for both enrollments and withdrawals. The Student Services Department will be responsible to gather all of the appropriate information which will be included in the enrollment and withdrawal packets and will, within 3 days of receipt, notify the Accounting Department. The Accounting Department will provide all the necessary information to the district of origin on the next district school day or day of operation (as in the summer months and other school breaks).

IDEA Cyber Charter School will have a program on the school portal to maintain current student data, including enrollments and withdrawals, so that we will always be able to give an up to the minute accounting to Pennsylvania Department of Education and School District child accounting forms (including, but not limited to, PDE-4059CS Instructional Time Summary, PDE-40262C Annual Attendance Membership Report, PDE-4002CS Summary Report of Aggregate Days Membership).

See Attachment : PDE-4059CS Instructional Time Summary

See Attachment : PDE-40262C Annual Attendance Membership Report

See Attachment : PDE-4002CS Summary Report of Aggregate Days Membership

See Attachment : PDE District Enrollment Notification Form,

See Attachment : IDEA District Withdrawal Notification Form

IDEA Cyber Charter School will gather the following data to submit to the PDE: Student name, names and addresses of paraeducators or legal guardians, student status, (resident/nonresident), date of birth, gender, ethnic code, grade level, entry code, entry date, withdrawal code, withdrawal date and exceptionality code.

Student Services and Finance will collaborate with the paraeducators to notify the student's school district of residence of the student's enrollment at IDEA Cyber Charter School within 15 days of enrollment and will use the forms developed by the PDE for the notification.

Likewise, IDEA Cyber Charter School and the paraeducator or guardian shall provide written notification to the school district of residence within 15 days following the withdrawal of a student from IDEA.

G. Describe plans to evaluate student performance.

Evaluation of student performance is vitally important to IDEA. Without meaningful assessment of student performance it will be impossible for IDEA to fulfill its educational goals. In order to perform such meaningful assessment IDEA will use several mechanisms to evaluate student performance; including oral and written assessments, PSSA/PASA

assessment testing, bi-annual standardized testing (i.e., MAPS), attendance, assignment completion, portfolios, self evaluations, hands on education (i.e., Carpenter Math), involvement in the community in which they live, volunteerism, level to which they take advantage of the opportunities offered by the school, community, and family. Students will also be evaluated by their participation in virtual classes, online tutoring sessions, movement through the school site and their products of learning. These evaluations of student progress will be completed at times specified by each students Placement Team on their customized plan of instruction.

See Attachment: Student Performance Assessment Grid

H. How will student development towards the school's overall learning goals and objectives be measured?

Students' development towards IDEA's learning goals and objectives will be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative evaluation will be measured using the evaluation tools describe in section "G" above. Qualitative progress will be measured in the manners described below. The CPI's and IEP's will incorporate personal mission statements that students will be free to review, rethink and revise as they move along in the journey toward their goals.

Faculty and staff will model "win-win" in both philosophy and practice while programs in each student's CPI will be designed to facilitate win-win. As students and their paraeducators and families begin to see, understand and use these concepts their value will, become apparent and ingrained into the very fabric of their being. This approach is equally supported for use with at-risk students to build self-esteem and confidence so that they may begin to realize some measure of success no matter how small. The 7 Habits, Love and Logic, Moral Intelligence are thus consistent with New Paradigm literature on the cultural context in schools as it relates to at-risk students which demonstrates that the culture of the staff filters into the work with students. When the staff and teachers live and model these foundational habits and practices, it becomes the precedent for all relationships and is the acceptable medium for students and staff alike to develop their character.

Authoritarian or punitive approaches such as preaching, demanding a particular behavior or demanding conformity will be considered aberrant staff and faculty behaviors and will be cause for development of a plan of correction. Standards and expectations will at no time be greater for students than for staff, i.e., if it would not be acceptable to dock staff or faculty paychecks if they are late with a job responsibility it will likewise not be acceptable to dock a student's work for being late. Just as teachers can be taught and given opportunities for growth and improvement without docking their pay for misspelled words or grammatical errors; students can be given the same considerations. This "Zero Tolerance for Double Standards" policy will strengthen authentic bonds between students and all the people who are at IDEA to educate and be educated.

When students have not learned how to be empathic it is typically because no one has ever shown or taught them. When educators respond to a student's lack of empathy/respect in authoritarian or punitive ways it insures that defensiveness and not empathy will be the outcome. At IDEA Cyber Charter School it is the duty of all the interacting staff members to model empathic behavior in such a clear and consistent manner that the students are able to identify and replicate these behaviors over time. Suggesting alternative methods of addressing difficult situations is as much a part of education as teaching them algebraic calculations.

When people, in this case students and paraeducators, have a safe nurturing, encouraging environment in which to develop these habits they are also able to develop empathy, the foundational concept of Moral Intelligence. IDEA teachers, staff and administration will by example teach the concept of seeking first to understand and then solving problems through empathic communication.

All of these practices will create a medium in which synergy, what Covey calls the summum bonum (the supreme or highest fruit) will be possible. Synergy is the magic that happens when $1+1=3$ or more Covey says, and it happens because the relationship between the parts is a part itself. It emerges when spirits of mutual respect and mutual understanding produce something new. It is not meeting half way nor compromising; rather it transcends the conflict to make something amazing that is win-win and that brings out the best in people and situations.

Finally, all members of the IDEA community, from the Board of Directors to the students, , will "sharpen our saws" on a regular basis (informally often and formally every six months) as we evaluate ourselves, our jobs, departments, programs and students and create an atmosphere of ongoing growth and improvement.

I. Describe how student evaluation will be used to improve student achievement and attain the stated learning objectives.

Explanation: Describe your commitment to high academic standards for all students; well-developed evaluation program for either school-developed or standardized testing; use of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) or the PA Alternate School Assessment (PASA); and an analysis of assessment results to improve student performance.

The Board of Directors will meet regularly and receive reports from the Executive Team, regarding student progress toward the school's learning goals, as measured by standardized tests, student test scores from grade level rubrics, and evidence from student portfolios and projects. In addition, the Board of Directors will conduct an annual review of student achievements relative to the goals and objectives of the school each year. The results of this review will be made public in the Annual Report, and a copy will be submitted to the School District and to the PA Department of Education by August 1st each year.

IDEA will partner with other educational vendors (e.g., KCDL, NWEA, Renzulli, etc.) to evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of our academic programs and examine student performance relative to the school's mission and to the standards and benchmarks of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These data will be utilized to provide feedback on whether the school's emphasis and resources are most effectively utilized. Results from the

Pennsylvania System of State Assessment (PSSA) in its respective grades will be particularly scrutinized, as they provide information on proficiency and reference points to other students in their age group. Results of these tests will be reviewed thoroughly by the Board of Trustees, by the Executive Team and by the teachers within two months of their receipt. Information from the school-wide tests will be included in The Annual Report. Results from these tests will be used by teachers and other staff members in professional development sessions to review the school's progress toward meeting its high academic standards. These sessions will identify areas where student performance is particularly weak, and enable teachers and other staff to develop corrective action plans to improve the focus and direction of the school.

On an individual student level, IDEA will use the various types of student achievement assessment types described earlier to improve each student's academic performance. Information revealed by these assessment tools will provide guidance to teachers and other IDEA staff members for adapting and modifying the student's learning plan. Furthermore, IDEA will examine the difference in how students perform in various testing formats or means of evaluation; for instance performance on multiple choice tests versus essay exams. Using this information we will develop plans for giving the students specific tools and resources for improving their performance on the testing methods that are more challenging for them.

5. School Community:

A. Describe the relationship of your school with the surrounding community.

IDEA Cyber Charter School's Student Resource Department will establish partnering relationships in the communities from which our students hail so that our students are able to take advantage of the opportunities available to them and so that they are able to give back to their communities.

B. Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the school's mission.

The mission of IDEA Cyber Charter School was designed and written by parents who have cyber schooled their children, have taught, administered and have done guidance counseling in cyber schools. We have seen what cyber education can do for students and are committed to building a school that will allow our students to benefit from all the extraordinary advantages of cyber education.

As some of us are parents of children with special needs, we have done extensive research; we have joined communication boards of other parents with children with special needs and have solicited input, advice, direction and ideas from many other parents from across the state. The suggestions and concerns of all these contacts have been incorporated into the design of IDEA Cyber Charter School. Particularly apparent in the interpretation, design and implementation of our special education department, their suggestions have shaped the tone, attributes of IDEA and the attitudes of the founders of IDEA.

As some of us are parents of gifted children, also with their own set of particular needs, we have researched educational literature and have consulted with professionals and other parents of gifted children in order to ensure that our programs will meet the needs of gifted children.

Our children will attend IDEA Cyber Charter School. The children of our colleagues, supporters, friends and families will attend IDEA Cyber Charter School. The students that attend regardless of where they originate, will all be viewed as treasures of highest value with whom we will use the collective genius of the founders, the Board of Directors, Executive Team, Directors, Teachers, Touchstones, School Guidance Counselors and all other staff in order to form positive relationships with students and families that remove, rather than create, barriers to education.

The IDEA Parent's Council will be actively involved in maintaining and pursuing the school's mission. One of the tasks of the Parent's Council will be to involve other parents in furthering the school's mission.

- C. Describe procedures established to review complaints of parents regarding operation of the charter school.

Explanation: Describe expectations of family members (or guardians) to be active participants in their children's education and the integration plan of the school to collaborate with other community organizations.

At IDEA parents who supervise their children's education at home are called paraeducators and are a part of the educational team. They will attend the Placement Cluster and receive training on how to cyber educate their children, how to navigate and use the site, how to reach people who can help them when they are experiencing problems or forget something, and the philosophies and pedagogies of IDEA.

The staff, faculty and administration of IDEA Cyber Charter School will seek first to understand the complaint and its affect on the student, parent (paraeducator/care giver) and/or student body. The person receiving the complaint will then seek to understand what the complainant would like to see happen. At that point, the person receiving the complaint will assure the complainant that s/he will communicate the concerns to (and name the person) and give the complainant the phone number of the person to whom the complaint is being referred. The complainant will also be given the route with a phone number to contact the Board of Directors if their concerns are not addressed appropriately to their satisfaction along with possible corrective action.

Attachment : Student-Parent Complaint Form

All complaints, along with actions taken and outcomes, will be logged, classified and analyzed so that we can not only fix things that are not working, but also see trends or patterns that could alert us to problems before they become crises. We will use this information to improve our staff, our programs and our school. By these means we will be able to track our progress and generalize the successes of change in one area to others where improvement is needed. These data and reports will be discussed (excluding embarrassing information) at the annual staff retreats in order to create learning opportunities to bolster our growth and development.

6. Extra-curricular activities (athletics, publications and organizations):

- A. Describe the program of extra-curricular activities planned for the charter school.

Note: Charter schools shall be permitted, if otherwise qualified, to be members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will offer extra-curricular activities as an extension of the overarching mission of the school and in keeping with the philosophy of the founding coalition. Students will be encouraged and aided in the pursuit of their interests and goals in all areas.

Students will be offered assistance in finding teams and programs that are available in their areas, in addition to offering a variety of cyber friendly extracurricular activities. The administration of IDEA Cyber Charter School will actively attempt to build positive relationships with the school districts throughout the state. We will work with students and families to make our students involvement in school district activities easily accessible. Should a student seek an opportunity that is unavailable through their district, we will aid them in locating a suitable program in their area. By helping students to pursue their outside interests, we will give them additional opportunities to discover their own genius.

Within the school, we will actively work to develop extra-curricular clubs and programs for our students. These clubs and programs will not only allow students an opportunity to find additional opportunities for personal growth and success but will further increase the sense of community that is so much a part of the founding coalition's philosophy.

Some possible clubs and programs that the school, families, and students might develop are a school newspaper, a chess club, a debating club, a movie club, Math Club, and a Book Club. Students will also have the opportunity to be involved in planning their prom and yearbook.

As the students begin to express interests in other types of clubs and programs, the administration and staff of IDEA Cyber Charter School will work to develop the programs in the cyber setting. We will also support the students in developing an online art gallery to display students work in the fine arts, photography, and writing.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will also establish a Student Government. This Student Government will serve to increase the students' sense of ownership in their education. IDEA will also encourage at least one representative of the Student Government to attend the Board meetings as a non-voting member.

By maximizing opportunities for success, building a sense of community, and imparting a sense of civic duty and the sense of ownership in their education, IDEA Cyber Charter School will be using extracurricular activities as another method of helping our students become confident, successful, well-prepared members of society.

- B. Describe whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district.

Explanation: Identify organized activities that complement the mission of the cyber charter school and the programs in the students' school districts of residence.

IDEA Founders have begun building bridges with local districts through IDEA Supplemental Education Services through which we have the opportunity to serve the students of their districts with tutoring, homework assistance, autism and Asperger's programs, standardized test prep including PSSA, SAT and PSAT, CPR, First Aid, Pet CPR, and other after school programs. The Johnstown IDEA SES is open and when it is stabilized we will then branch to other districts. Currently our plans include Punxutawney and the Oaks area.

We have begun working with John Augustine at Johnstown VoTech to serve their students and to combine our human capital and serve the students in the Greater Johnstown area with academic resources. Five school districts are represented by the Johnstown VoTech and we are confident that taking a service approach to relationships with the school districts will be a catalyst to having a productive and healthy collaborative relationship between us for the benefit of the students of Pennsylvania.

It is not a secret that there is considerable political friction between the districts and the cyber schools. IDEA is taking a multi-faceted approach to building bridges over the deep chasms that currently

6. Technology Support:

- A. Describe how your cyber charter school uses technology to provide a significant portion of its curriculum and to deliver a significant portion of instruction using the Internet or other electronic means.

By way of the various mediums of technology there will always be an open line of communication available for students to someone who may be of service to them at the school. If they are working on their schoolwork, they will have a little Question button icon light bulb to click to talk to their teacher when the teacher is in his/her office. Students will be able to see when their teacher is in, but they are not limited to only asking questions when their teacher light is on. They can ask a question and when the teacher returns the light will show that she/he has a message from a student. Touchstones will also have hours so that students can come into a multimedia classroom and talk or go to straight, internal IM'ing for private conversations. The student will see a solid light while they are in a queue to talk to a teacher and a flashing light when the teacher has answered them. Access to conversations is restricted by passwords and processes to prevent abusive eavesdropping. More open access within the school community to communication is available to students and paraeducators alike by means of an internal e-mail system.

IDEA will deliver its curriculum via Blackboard, the leading learning management system in the world. KCDL is one of Blackboard's largest users and, as such, receives prompt service and good visibility into Blackboard developments. Blackboard maintains

KCDL-specific student servers for KCDL users, and there will be a dedicated Blackboard server for the IDEA students, ensuring robust and responsive online learning for the students. Blackboard has a well-developed and intuitive learning environment that ensures that students and parents are able to communicate with teachers and other students, and are able to access their online curriculum easily. A significant portion of the school's curriculum, including the vast majority of Kindergarten through 12th grade courses, will be delivered via Blackboard. It is possible that some mainstream students, who do not need special education or other types of special interventions, will access virtually all of their courses via Blackboard. Consistent use of this tool will allow students to establish familiarity with a consistent learning environment, which will enhance the learning experience.

Blackboard is also the leading learning management system for colleges and universities who are using online curriculum. Thus, IDEA is setting a higher standard for our teachers and our students both at IDEA and all (teachers, students and touchstones who are pursuing higher education) will be better prepared to use this LMS for higher education purposes.

The majority of the curriculum to be delivered has been developed by Highly Qualified, state certified teachers, expert in their field. The award winning courses are Pennsylvania state aligned and are rigorous and challenging. The design and development of the courses take full advantage of the most sophisticated technological innovations that drive student interest and student achievement. KCDL consistently evaluates and updates the courses to ensure compliance with PA Standards and Benchmarks.

IDEA will also use a robust tool, Elluminate that allows for teachers to provide real-time, synchronous virtual class sessions. This tool, which allows for the sharing of a teacher's desktop, and for a whiteboard to be shared between teacher and student, approximates the classroom experience. There is also voice over IP, so that students can hear each other and the teacher. The tool also provides students the ability to virtually raise their hands, and to ask questions of the teacher via text or voice. All class sessions are archived, so that a student can replay a class session if a particular subject was confusing, or if scheduling prevented the student from attending the initial class session.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will have two sets of email systems – one internal that is for everyone (students, paraeducators, staff and faculty) and one external system so that we can communicate with the outside world. The external e-mail system will be for staff and faculty to communicate with individuals, programs and community organizations and businesses outside of the school in order to assist students to meet their goals and plans.

B. Describe how you will improve student achievement through effective uses of technology.

As described above, IDEA will be utilizing the most sophisticated educational technology available to ensure improvement in student achievement. However, even the

most sophisticated technology cannot help students achieve if the students are not prepared and trained in the effective use of such technology. IDEA believes that technology alone cannot teach our students. Comprehensive and meaningful preparation for IDEA students is a core standard for the program. A reflection of this importance can be found in the Placement Cluster Program. Placement clusters, though face to face, are vital to the effective use of technology. Placement Clusters will be held in geographic locations throughout the state for ease, convenience and accessibility to students and their families. The program goals for Placement Clusters are as follows:

1. Acquaint students with the technology we are using and spend more time training students who need it for whatever reasons.
2. To teach our students and their families how to cyber and set them up for success with realistic expectations, tools for efficiency, planning, structure, goal setting and general success strategies.
3. Administer baseline NWEA and COIN Testing via computers.
4. Administer, via the Internet, Renzulli Assessment and teach students how to use the Renzulli LMS.
5. Orientation to 7-Habits, Love and Logic and Moral Intelligence; write personal mission statements.
6. Select and set up the online curriculum for the year.
7. To become acquainted with students in person and begin to build relationships; introduce and provide supports available at IDEA – who they are and to whom to turn for which needs.
8. Provide opportunities for students to get acquainted and begin to form friendships with other students from their geographical area; provide foundation for support networks for students, parents and paraeducators.
9. Ignite school spirit, school pride, ownership, belonging and responsibility.
10. Motivational Launch for our students to a successful first year at IDEA.

By using the Renzulli system via a computer delivered modality, IDEA students will receive an immediate assessment of learning style and interests; it gives them access to technological resources aligned to their assessment results. In preparing students CPI's and IEP's educators will utilize the Renzulli results to best maximize the use of technology to insure achievement. For example, the Renzulli assessment demonstrates that a student is a learner who will best be served through significant teacher interaction, IDEA may choose to place such a student in courses with multiple Elluminate classes. On the other hand, if the assessment reveals a self-directed learner then we will provide them with LAP's types of course work.

Because IDEA will be providing the most sophisticated and comprehensive online curriculum available, student involvement and achievement will be enhanced. Ongoing achievement will be assured because the online curriculum is constantly being revised, update and improved. Vital to the success of a cyber education experience is the vibrancy and freshness of the courses delivered online. Our curriculum harnesses the Internet to provide access to relevant and informative web resources and create state of the art learning opportunities.

By using the NWEA and Renzulli assessments in a computer based mode, we achieve immediate results which enable us to expeditiously design the CPI for each student. The technology will show early evidence of struggling students: poor attendance; not completing assignments; falling behind in class work; not responding to teachers and touchstones. Such early evidence will allow intervention before these issues develop into academic crises. We will be able to perform Child Find, identify disabilities, poor performance on online evaluations retest, modify the curriculum, change the curriculum, and be responsive to students needs and remediate problems with deliberate and timely services.

IDEA's use of the NWEA's computer facilitated assessment system is yet another example of how effective use of technology enhances student achievement. While NWEA assessments will be used in initial student analyses and will help in the crafting of the CPI's, the more significant impact will be seen in the longer term student achievement. NWEA can be administered up to 4 times a year, and gives us a moving picture of student's progress, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and is not grade limited in results (it will show where a student is performing regardless of grade level).

While training and preparation of students for effective use of technology is vital, equally important is ensuring that the technology not prove frustrating. A significant source of cyber charter failure comes from failing and inefficient technology systems. Having robust, trustworthy and professionally supported technology systems will help ensure that students can make effective use of the educational technologies described above. Our partnership with KCDL guarantees that IDEA will be able to provide the most robust and effective educational technology in terms of assessment and curriculum delivery. As importantly, IDEA's 24 hour student and teacher technical support will prevent the type of frustration and disconnection that afflict students in many cyber charter schools.

By combining the best available educational technologies (Blackboard, Renzulli, NWEA, Elluminate, and KCDL Curriculum) with powerful technology infrastructure, IDEA students will be well-placed to make the best use of technology to improve their academic achievement.

7. Technology Support:

C. Describe the technical support that will be provided to students and parents.

IDEA Cyber Charter School's Information Technology Department will provide two levels of support to students and parents/paraeducators. The first level of technical support will be provided by IDEA's Technology Touchstones who will receive the call, document and help resolve the problem. If that does not solve the student's problem they will escalate the call to the second level of support.

The 2nd level of support is KCDL's 24 hour tech support hotline which will be available to respond to more technical issues and questions.

Every student will have, fastened to their computer, a durable label with the phone number for the HDO (Help Desk Operator). If a student is experiencing a problem they will be able to reach a live person 24 hours a day, year round with the exception of holidays.

D. Describe the policy for ensuring the privacy and security measures that will guarantee the confidentiality of data gathered online.

All digital student data gathered online will be stored on secured servers that are dedicated solely to the storage of IDEA student data. IDEA will ensure via these dedicated servers that no data shall migrate or bleed to some other accessible location, where unauthorized users will be able to compromise the data. The dedicated IDEA servers will be located in a secured data facility with biometric security measures controlling access to the servers. All servers will have backup power access and all servers will have redundancy.

Data that will be entered into the Blackboard system will be stored securely in dedicated secured server hosted by Black Board. Black Board maintains state of the art server security. Black Board provides 99.7% application availability supported by redundant data centers, physical security, network security and 3 levels of data backup. Blackboard provides 24 X 7 proactive monitoring and reporting to ensure that IDEA student data gathered online remains secure and confidential.

If they choose to complete the form online, once they submit it, the information is sent to a secured section of our web portal from which it is not possible to remove or access from outside. The design of the web portal will insure security of information provided from the point of initial enrollment on. Only staff with need-to-know will have access to personal student data and management will periodically audit staff access of student data.

E. Describe the methods to ensure authenticity of student work and the proctoring of exams.

Attendance will start recording and will be logged as soon as the student signs into the web portal. The portal will be developed so that the time logs will be kept on the same server that students sign into. Every user name and password will have selected “rights” upon signing into the school portal; students and their paraeducators will have access to their own attendance records but not to other students. Administrators, teachers, touchstones and student services will have access to student records as needed to perform the duties of their positions. Student work will be authenticated because students will all have their own username and password and all assignments for each student will only be accepted if submitted through their course. IDEA Founders are convinced and confident that CPI’s which

will result in customized work will reduce the risk of inauthentic work by students. We also anticipate that it will have the added benefits of higher quality work from students, student work that is completed in timely ways, and vastly improved assessments as students will own their education and what they learn.

The pedagogical foundations of IDEA's character education are the Covey literature of 7 Habits and the 8th Habit; the Faye literature of Love and Logic and the Borba literature of Moral Intelligence.

Teachers, touchstones and other staff will be trained, in-serviced and supported to incorporate these foundational philosophies into the delivery of education and addressing behavioral issues. According to Faye (Effective Discipline for Today's Schools) youngsters have four basic needs: 1) to be in – Inclusion; 2) to have a say in what happens – control; 3) to like and be liked – affection; and 4) to be seen as capable – competency. “To the extent we can help kids fulfill these needs; we bond them to us, to the school, and to an ongoing love of education. When these needs aren't fulfilled in kids, they are driven from us. When we address these needs kids become responsible, own and solve their problems, do their work, and behave in a somewhat reasonable manner. “Being responsible is a learned behavior” meaning we must teach it.

The second partner in this wedding of philosophical ideologies is Covey's, 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens which we will begin modeling and teaching in Kindergarten. The entire program of IDEA Cyber Charter School from the curriculum, school design, governance, enrollment of students, reward/motivation/encouragement celebration systems and educational delivery, center around and incorporate Covey's 7 Habits literature.

By involving our students and their paraeducators/paraeducators in their education planning from the moment of their enrollment in both the student's education and in the assessments of the success of the chosen programs and the school itself, we are teaching them to be proactive and authentic – both in opportunity and by example. We are also teaching their entire families to be proactive as we support family programs that nurture family health.

We are teaching our students to begin with the end in mind as we ask our students to consider their future and set their goals, which we will help them develop over time and thereby begin with the end in mind.

Our touchstones are pivotal to teaching and assisting our students to set priorities that will support their success in school and in life. Touch-stones will help students to assess their own style and practices and guide them to self-evaluate and thereby self-correct. By making this practice safe our students will be freed to learn intellectually and grow as a thriving human being.

The CPI's and IEP's will incorporate personal mission statements that students will be free to review, rethink and revise as they move along in the journey toward their goals.

Faculty, staff and programs will model “win-win” in both philosophy and practice. As students and their paraeducators and families begin to see, understand and use these concepts their value will, and the value of the habits will become a paraeducator and ingrained into the very fabric of their being. This approach is equally supported for use with at-risk students to build self-esteem and confidence so that they may begin to realize some measure of success no matter how small. The 7 Habits, Love and Logic, Moral Intelligence are thus consistent with New Paradigm and literature on the cultural context in schools as it relates to at-risk students which demonstrates that the culture of the staff filters into the work with students. When the staff and teachers live and model these foundational habits and practices, it becomes the precedent for all relationships and is the acceptable medium for students and staff alike to develop their character.

Authoritarian or punitive approaches such as preaching, demanding a particular behavior or demanding conformity will be considered aberrant staff and faculty behaviors and will be cause for development of a plan of correction. Standards and expectations will at no time be greater for students than for staff, i.e., if it would not be acceptable to dock staff or faculty paychecks if they are late with a job responsibility it will likewise not be acceptable to dock a student’s work for being late. This “No Double Standard” policy will strengthen authentic bonds between students and all the people who are at IDEA to educate and be educated.

When students have not learned how to be empathic it is typically because no one has ever shown or taught them. When educators respond to a student’s lack of empathy/respect in authoritarian or punitive ways it insures that defensiveness and not empathy will be the outcome. At IDEA Cyber Charter School it is the duty of all the interacting staff members to model empathic behavior in such a clear and consistent manner that the students are able to identify and replicate these behaviors over time. Suggesting alternative methods of addressing difficult situations is as much a part of education as teaching them algebraic calculations.

When anyone, in this case students and paraeducators, has a safe nurturing, encouraging environment in which to develop these habits they are also able to develop empathy, the foundational concept of Moral Intelligence. IDEA teachers, staff and administration will by example teach the concept of seeking first to understand and then solving problems through empathic communication.

Using this model students will produce authentic work, will develop a personal integrity that will need little if any outside controls to maintain because it will emanate from within their own psyche’s, spirits and positive sense of who they are. While we will proctor all standardized testing according to the laws of the state of PA and the regulations set forth in the exams, we expect to see students becoming comfortable in learning by making mistakes which will also increase authenticity of their work habits and their work.

Teachers will have results from the MAP and Renzulli from the time of placement so that inconsistencies can be verified very quickly. If it is determined that the student is doing their own work and there is a gap between test results and work submitted, teachers will have the ability to request retesting through Student Resources and the student will be given a retest so that we are able with confidence to educate them appropriately. If it is found that they have test anxiety or there is some other reason that they do better with school work than exams we will be able to provide opportunities to become more comfortable with exams and that is a part of our student's lives and a factor in their academic success. They might, for example, be referred to the tutoring program in the IDEA Supplemental Education Services for standardized test taking skills. If it is found, however, that the student is cheating then the Plagiarism Policy will be evoked and the student will be dealt with according to that policy.

F. Describe equipment such as hardware, software, and Internet connections to be provided to students.

The Director of IT of IDEA Cyber Charter School has recommended an HP Smart buy NX6325 Turion Laptop with a 1.6 gig processor and 512 mb of ram. Because of the significant and rapid innovations in technology that occur IDEA may opt to use a different brand or model laptop for students but any such laptop will have comparable characteristics and features to the Turion. Contained in each laptop is a wireless adaptor, Ethernet adaptor and 56 k internal dial-up modem.

The software for each computer will be Windows XP Professional Operating System coupled with Windows Office 2003 as well as Symantec corporate edition antivirus and content filtering program. In addition there will also be Phoenix Recoverware Pro or some similar program to help with trouble shooting every computer. (IDEA reserves the right to substitute comparable software provided that any substitution results in comparable or better results for the students). The internet connections will be based on the availability of providers in the student's geographical location. The financial compensation will cover each students cost of internet provider in full. Although high speed is not available in every location, IDEA will encourage high speed access where possible. The IDEA curriculum has been developed, however, to be accessible even from a dial-up connection.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. Statement of Need:

A. Why is there a need for this type of school?

There are many students who are unable to thrive and make appropriate academic progress in the currently available educational settings. We receive e-mails and phone calls regularly from parents

who are desperate for something different than what they are able to access currently. They include large numbers of parents of children on the autism spectrum, parents of gifted children who are not being challenged and are growing disillusioned with education in general. Others, such as pregnant and parenting teens, those working to support families or themselves and those with needs who leave them vulnerable to bullying will find IDEA a refuge and a setting where they will be able to blossom and grow academically and personally. Students who are also excelling and pursuing careers in athletics, dance, Olympics and others also need educational opportunities that will facilitate their other aspirations.

While there are other schools who serve some of these students there were none that we could find with the level of accommodations that IDEA has built into the foundations of the school. There are no other schools that we have found where an entire department exists to remove barriers to education such as poverty related issues, transportation issues unique to cyber education, connecting students to resources in their communities for volunteerism and employment, well-developed tutoring programs (Johnstown, Oaks/King of Prussia area serving IDEA students in those areas and which will also serve students in neighboring communities as a service giving back to the communities, as well as online to serve all students who attend IDEA).

The socialization needs of students are often a concern that is expressed whenever home education (whether home schooling or cyber schooling) is discussed. While some schools have developed opportunities for students who live in a driving distance to their location can attend a gifted program or some arts programs, IDEA has developed opportunities for all students to participate in academically focused socialization opportunities, including but not limited to the clusters and all-school project that will include all students every year.

Children of immigrants, non-English speaking students and children of migrant workers are three other groups that would benefit from a cyber education at IDEA. To support learning for these students IDEA has developed a robust ELL program.

See Attachment : ELL Program

See Attachment : ELL Curriculum Coded

- B. Explain why the cyber charter school model is an appropriate vehicle to address this need.

Explanation: Provide recognition of potential opportunities to improve service and expand choices for students and parents.

“We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need in order to do this. Whatever we do, it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven’t so far.”

Ron Edmonds,
Director of Urban Studies,
Harvard University.

Many students are doing well in their current or currently available educational settings; however, those who are not thriving need something different than what they currently have access to in PA. They don't need a brick and mortar school online. Through communication with hundreds of parents we have learned that many students cannot thrive and achieve academic successes in programs where all students are expected to move at the same pace through the same coursework. Many students need accommodations that are simply not currently available in PA. While some other schools claim to provide individualized education, the reality is that all students are expected to do the same lessons, complete them at the same rate and with the same exact standards as every other student. When accommodations are made, they tend to be at the end when the student is failing and already feeling like they cannot do the work. These schools have learned how to look good on paper but the reality of accommodations that allow students to feel academically successful are woefully unavailable.

IDEA has been developed to broaden the experiences for kinesthetic, hands-on, experiential, and other learners with the cluster programs (e.g., the applied math cluster - Carpenter/Sewing/Quilting/ Cooking math, Fine Arts - Drama, Music, Poetry and Art, Science - creepy crawly, astronomy, biology, zoology, chemistry labs) and many others. With the self-paced opportunities at IDEA we will create CPI's tailored to meet each student's individual goals for their education. Traditional brick and mortar schools are not able to provide self-paced learning opportunities as IDEA can with our CPI's and intensive student supported learning. Pregnant and parenting teens, student who need to work, students in families where parents must travel for work can take their school with them where ever they go if they are IDEA students. Students who are pursuing non-academic interests such as gymnastics, swimming, dance, the arts and sports can complete their education if they attend IDEA because they can attend school when it is convenient for them. Students, who observe many religious holidays when typical schools are in session, can select their holidays and their days off of school and still earn perfect attendance.

Students today have experienced an escalation in bullying and school violence in combination with an increasingly violent society over all. This, when added to threats to our national security – perceived or real, has created a very real atmosphere of insecurity and potential violence for students.

We are confident that the pedagogy and philosophies of education and relationships that are in place for IDEA Cyber Charter School and our school design help students develop a greater sense of safety and well-being.

There are significant differences between IDEA and other cyber charter schools that will provide opportunities for learning experiences that will make scholarship fun and exciting for students. When students who have become discouraged and for whom education has lost its appeal, see that it is relevant to their lives and goals, their interest is renewed and we have the opportunity to develop them into life-long learners. For other students who don't fit well into the herd-mentality of most educational institutions, where every student is expected to learn at the same rate and in the same way, IDEA will be a refreshing educational experience. We recognize that every student has genius and that it is not expressed or applied in the same way as every other student.

We recognize the need for every student to feel included and a part of their education and their school. Inclusion is a vital component in creating positive self-esteem, motivation, empathy and appreciation of others. Fostering inclusion and diversity of every kind will help ensure the success of IDEA students, and of IDEA itself.

These are the things that are unique to IDEA:

- 1) Placement Clusters - where IDEA students will be coming together with other students from their geographical region.
 - a. This will give our students a chance to launch their new school friendships with students that they will be getting together with for field trips, other learning clusters, PSSA testing and social events....
 - b. PC's will be the time that we administer placement tests - the NWEA so that we know where each student is academically which will give us the foundation we need to do research to empirically determine the strengths and weaknesses of IDEA, our programs and how we deliver them to our students; COIN testing their so that we can have an initial understanding of what their aptitudes are indicating to give them ideas and direction for their mission statements, testing that will show us what their interests are, how they learn, and then open up a world of websites that match their interests, how they learn and their abilities and then direct them into relevant, real time learning projects.
 - c. PC's will give the faculty and staff of IDEA to meet and get to know our students and for them to know us so that relationships are begun and can be nurtured and developed.
 - d. Every student will write (or dictate if they are not writing yet) their own personal mission statement - consistent with IDEA's adherence to the 7-Habits philosophy.
 - e. Every student and their paraeducator will participate in their customized plan of instruction which will get its original design at the Placement Cluster.
 - f. Last but not least, PC's will give us a chance to set our youngsters up for success at IDEA by orienting them to IDEA's school portal, the learning management system, other educational technologies, and how to successfully cyber school at IDEA - which is very different from other cybers in PA.
- 2) Customized Plans of Instruction (CPI's) - which means that every student will have a curriculum that is custom tailored just for them - according to where they are academically, how they learn, and structured to help them fulfill their personal mission statement. Because every student is incredibly valuable and precious.
- 3) Paraeducators – At IDEA parents are not just the people at home who have to take orders from the teachers and make someone else's curriculum work for their child at someone else's pace with deadlines and penalties that make children hate their parents and school. Parents are paraeducators and they are a part of the educational team.
 - a. Paraeducators will receive the trainings that the teachers and touchstones receive and be included in meetings so that they are in every way, a part of the educational team.
 - b. They will have a web area (the details have not been finalized) probably similar to a chat room where they can exchange ideas, develop recommendations to improve the school, plan events and fundraisers, and receive recognition for their

- contributions of their genius to not only their children, but to IDEA and thus all the students.
- c. Paraeducators will have their own e-mail and login to the school.
 - d. After two years as a paraeducator, if they have completed all the training and have received positive evaluations, they will qualify to apply for the position of Touchstone. At that time, we will attempt to hire all touchstones from the pool of qualified and interested paraeducators.
- 4) Touchstones – are the wonderful people who will be trained along with teachers and paraeducators, and will be an immensely valuable part of the educational team.
- a. Touchstones will maintain consistent communication with the students and their family. We are hoping to keep our touchstones for a very long time so that they can follow their students through from wherever they come into the school until their students graduate and then start all over again.
 - b. They will connect students and their families with the resources inside IDEA (employees, Pregnant and Parenting Teens) and will make referrals to other departments (i.e., Student Resources, Guidance and Virtual Family) when other services are needed or would be helpful.
 - c. Touchstones will be a resource for families to turn to for direction with academic questions or needs, financial needs, housing needs and anything that can come up that will derail a student’ progress or make learning more difficult.
- 5) Student Resources – is one of the most exciting departments in the school.
- a. Student Resources will develop a database of all of the resources available in each community from which IDEA students hail.
 - b. The Database will be used to assist students with volunteer and employment opportunities, opportunities to participate in community projects, develop academic projects for Renzulli learning, and connect families to resources in their communities when they are facing further poverty-related marginalization that would create obstacles to learning for students (poverty-related marginalization includes such things as utility shut-offs, the possibility of evictions and foreclosures),
 - c. Student Resources will also arrange the locations for PSSA testing and the social events that follow (that will make the PSSA’s worth the effort to the students).
 - d. All field trips will be set up through Student Resources.
 - e. All Cluster activities (Placement Cluster, Applied Math Cluster – including Carpenter Math, quilting math, sewing math and cooking math – Performing and Fine Arts Cluster, and others according to student interest and need).
- 6) Folklorist - One of the people that we anticipate will be the most beloved by the students will be our folklorist.
- a. Dr. Sidener will be working with students in a variety of areas including learning to appreciate their own and other’s cultures, learning differences and embracing diversity.
 - b. She is also going to develop programs to promote school pride and school spirit.
 - c. She will do exercises with students at Placement Clusters to begin this journey, to get to know the students and for them to begin to know her.

- d. She is a story-teller and will teach our students how to become story tellers – fulfilling the vision of at least one of the founders, “Live so that you have lots of stories to tell.”
1. School Philosophy – IDEA is founded on the principles of Love & Logic, The 7-Habits literature and Moral Intelligence. The founders of IDEA see this as a perfect marriage of philosophical thought imperative to effective education and the bringing up of responsible citizenry.
 - a. With the 7 Habits we begin with the end in mind, set a course for our lives so that our students are not just swept through life but that they live it to the fullest and that they learn how to set goals and plan with the end in mind.
 - b. With Love and Logic they are allowed to make their own mistakes so that they can develop into responsible people who learn from their mistakes; but are not afraid to make them because they are a part of living and growing.
 - c. Moral Intelligence fits perfectly with both as it teaches empathy and understanding the perspective of the other, from that persons world view and life experiences. It teaches listening to the other, actively with the bent to understand.
2. IDEA’s Pedagogy – Understanding by Design, Constructivism and Differentiated Instruction – all of which come together perfectly to allow for customization of curricula for all of our students.
3. IDEA’s Curriculum- IDEA will have one of the most comprehensive and complete online curriculum available currently, with a wide variety of courses, including Advanced Placement courses, and foreign language courses such as Chinese and Japanese. The use of Elluminate will also provide IDEA with a robust and distinct instructional ability.
4. IDEA’s Organizational Structure is unique among cybers as well. Rather than a top down organizational chart as the others have, IDEA has a bottom up organizational chart. This was done intentionally so that the premise is for the Executive team to be the ones supporting the Directors and those reporting to them so that they are receiving all the support they need to be able to do the job for which they have been hired.
 - a. The Executive Team is there to teach, support, nurture and guide the staff and faculty so that their genius can be realized and fully applied in their work and they in turn, can give the same support to students so that their genius can be released and fully used in their learning and preparation for life.
 - b. The team approach is evident through out the school design as different folks will be working together at different times thus many teams, many opportunities to develop leadership skills for staff and students alike.
5. Students will participate in a school-wide learning project every year and will work together with students who are in different grades and at different levels – as they will be doing when they get into the work world.

6. Finally, IDEA is a year-round school and students, along with their paraeducators, will select the 180 days they attend school. Thus family needs can better be met, students can attend school year round if they so choose and there is more time for students who need it to be able to reach a level of proficient in their work.
 - a. Consistent with its democratic commitment, when students can control the days that they choose to attend school they have control over their education and will have the responsibility of choosing wisely so that they are able to meet their goals as set forth in their personal mission statement which they write and then update each year.
 - b. We intend to make learning at IDEA such a fun, interesting, relevant educational experience that students will come just for the fun of learning. We anticipate that IDEA students will attend more than 180 days a year because of its value and significance in their lives and their life goals.
 - c. Teachers will teach in teams; the benefits for teachers and the rewards – professionally and personally are really immeasurable. Financially, we are competitive in wages and excel in benefits for a family friendly work environment.

Finally, the foundational model of pedagogy which teachers, paraeducators, touchstones, TA's and the Special Education Department will all be trained and in-serviced, the founders of IDEA Cyber Charter School have chosen the Education model of Understanding by Design interwoven with Constructivism and Differentiated Instruction. This marriage of programs is designed to make schools better by providing educators with state-of-the-art educational thinking, tools, and training. (See Tomlinson and McTighe, Hall and others). We are confident that these pedagogies will equip our teaching staff to uniquely tackle the challenging issues we face as cyber educators. This model is consistent with our commitment to make students and student improvement a central focus of the school.

IDEA Cyber Charter School is an excellent resource for the students whose needs cannot or are not being fully met in their home district schools because they are learning at home when it works best for them. Because they may attend and receive credit for attending school year round, they can even achieve perfect attendance. Athletes who need to use gyms while other students are in school can do so and attend school when it works for them. Students who need Kinesthetic, hands-on, experiential learning opportunities can have their curriculum customized to their learning styles and needs. Students can effectively take their school with them and have the constancy of their peers and school even when other things are not as stable for them. Foster children, for example, would not have to change schools every time they get moved to another foster home. Overall, cyber education at IDEA will create enrichment opportunities and expand the learning experience for all students who choose to attend.

2. School Demographics:

- A. What are the school's enrollment projections for each of the first five years? What is the school's ultimate enrollment goal? What grades will be served? What is the entry age for kindergarten students and the entry age for beginners? How many students are expected to be in each grade or grouping?

IDEA's enrollment projections for the first year are 2,000 increasing by 20% each year; second year – 2400; third year 2880; fourth year – 3456; fifth year 4147. These are “up to” numbers; IDEA Cyber Charter School: Pennsylvania's iQ academy has prepared for the infrastructure to serve up to these numbers of students each year. The school will be able to function at lower numbers and also serve students well in every way. IDEA's ultimate enrollment goal is 4500 students; however we will not increase enrollment beyond the number whom we can serve well with all of the services and programs designed and committed to in this application for a cyber charter.

IDEA will serve students in grades Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The age of entry for kindergarten is 5 by the first day of school (July first of each year, except when July first falls on a Saturday or Sunday).

The entry age for beginners is six. The entry age for kindergarten is 5 years old by the first day of school and the entry age for beginners is 6 years old. Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school as a beginner, which may be no later than eight years of age, until the age of seventeen or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first. It is mandatory for all children of compulsory school age having a legal residence in Pennsylvania to attend a day school in which the subjects and activities prescribed by the standards of the state board of education are taught in the English language.

IDEA intends to enroll 100 students in each grade from kindergarten through fifth grade; and 200 students in each grade from sixth through twelfth.

B. Describe the community or region where the school, particularly the administrative office, will be located.

It is the intention of the founders to locate the Headquarters for IDEA Cyber Charter School at 204 Schell Lane, Upper Providence, PA.

This area has been building up over the past decade with both residential and business growth. The school district is – waiting for information from Joe Leone

C. Why was this location selected? Are there other locations suitable to the needs and focus of the school?

This location was selected because the price is affordable (about 60-70% of other facilities, none of which are as ideal spatially). The location is safe and will be comfortable for staff and students alike. It will accommodate all of our programs and the directors who are located on this side of the state. It will also be accessible for many students located in the middle to eastern part of the state. It was previously occupied by a medical scientific research company who left significant amounts of expensive infrastructure behind, including state of the art technology and telecommunications networking

hardware. There are a few rooms that would convert nicely into science labs for science clusters.

There are certainly many other locations that would be suitable for the school but so far none are as ideal. Some have the space and accommodations needed but the cost is nearly twice that of our first choice. Others that are the price that we are able to commit to within the confines of our budget are either too large or would require months of renovation to prepare them for cyber school uses. Additionally, facilities come on the market every month and there is no doubt that an appropriate facility could be located should this one be chosen by another company.

D. Describe any unique demographic characteristics of the student population to be served including primary languages spoken.

Explanation: Provide a description of the students to be served and the community in which the school will be located.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will joyfully welcome all children who apply to the school. We look forward to serving groups of students who are discriminated against because they are immigrants, and others who are disenfranchised because of their migrant status. We plan to have an ESL program large enough to serve all the students who come to use with English Language Learner needs and challenges.

3. District Relations/Evidence of Support:

A. Provide evidence that your cyber charter school has the sustainable support to operate.

Attachment : Letters, Petitions and Surveys of Support for IDEA Cyber Charter School.

B. What efforts have you made to notify the district(s) from which your charter school would draw students?

IDEA Cyber Charter School Founders sent letters to every superintendent or their representative in every school district in PA.

Attachment : Letters to School Superintendent

Attachment : Letters to Executive Directors of all IU's in PA.

C. What efforts will be implemented to maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts?

Note: Please attach letters of intent that were sent to all school districts from which the cyber charter school could reasonably expect to draw students.

IDEA will work to implement and maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts by inviting the district teachers to participate in staff development and teacher trainings.

We will also actively participate in PATTAN trainings which will bring us together as educators to collaborate on strategies to improve education at micro and macro levels.

IDEA will actively pursue opportunities to invite district students, through their school administrators to participate in unique IDEA opportunities such as community projects to improve the quality of life for people in communities from which IDEA serves students.

- D. Convey the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school and its founding coalition. Document community support among teachers, parents, students, community members, institutional leaders and others, through the use of letters of support, surveys, or other tangible means.

IDEA Founders elicit excitement for this school where ever they go. Parents, students and teachers, therapists and psychologists are excited about the amazing opportunities that will be provided for students across the spectrum from gifted and wanting to accelerate their education to students whose genius does not flow so quickly through academic curriculum. Creative teachers who are looking for more cosmopolitan teaching opportunities catch and are infected with the vision and mission of IDEA very quickly. Parents of children for whom they are not able to obtain FAPE in their current educational setting are given new hope for their youngster's education and lives. We have talked to parents from every corner of the state and many places in between and everywhere we are met with excitement and encouragement to continue until this school is chartered.

We have a nine year old boy in Pittsburgh on the autism spectrum waiting for IDEA to open so that he can return to school. Another young girl in Braddock Hills with Asperger's, who asks regularly when she get to start at IDEA, an eight year old gifted child who has decided to drop out of school until IDEA opens; his parents are especially eager to see our charter granted. These are but a representative sample of the children waiting for IDEA.

Attachment : Letters, Petitions and Surveys of Support for IDEA Cyber Charter School.

Explanation: Document efforts to foster open communications with local school districts; evidence that the founders inspire the confidence of their targeted community; evidence that the program provides an attractive educational alternative to students and parents; and evidence that the breadth of community support extends beyond the core group of founders.

Originally when we applied and were hopeful that we would get out charter last January and again in July we had developed an agreement with the Greater Johnstown Vocational Technical School to lease 10,000 square feet of space in their building. The governing board of the Vo-Tech consists of members of the school districts of Richland, Johnstown, Windbur, Forrest Hills, all of whom voted to accept our proposal to locate our cyber school within the Vo-Tech Center. We have begun the necessary steps to build a library and they were excited about the prospect of their students being able to use our library. Although we are no longer leasing from the Vo-Tech we will still be happy to allow those students and others to use the James Clifford Forsythe Memorial Library.

Another way that IDEA is reaching out to the school districts to partner in providing the best possible educational opportunities and hopefully a bridge for the relationship between IDEA

and the district schools is through our Supplemental Education Programs located in the Johnstown Galleria. IDEA Supplemental Education Programs include such programs as Standardized Test Prep, One on One Homework Help, Group Tutoring along with other courses designed to personal competence.

III. GOVERNANCE

1. Profile of Founding Coalition:

- A. Describe the make-up of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter, including the names of the founders, their background and experiences, and references for each.
- B. Discuss how the group came together, as well as any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups. Provide information on the manner in which community groups are involved in the charter school planning process.
- C. Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

Explanation: Describe a group that is composed of people with a range of professional skills capable of the organizational, financial, pedagogical, legal and other skills required to operate a functioning public school.

2. Governance:

- A. Describe the proposed management organization of the school, including the following requirement:

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees of the cyber charter school, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, shall be used in order to take action on the following subjects:

- *School calendar (must include 990 hours or 180 days of instruction for secondary students [grades 7-12] and 900 hours or 180 days for elementary students [grades 1-6]. School cannot be kept open for students or staff on Sundays, Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, the 1st of January, Christmas, or Saturdays unless Monday is the weekly holiday for the entire school year)*
- *Adopting textbooks*
- *Appointing or dismissing charter school administrators*
- *Adopting the annual budget*
- *Purchasing or selling of land*
- *Locating new buildings or changing the locations of old ones*
- *Creating or increasing any indebtedness*
- *Adopting courses of study*
- *Designating depositories for school funds*
- *Entering into contracts of any kind where the amount involved exceeds \$200*
- *Fixing salaries or compensation of administrators, teachers, or other employees of the charter school.*
- *Entering into contracts with and making appropriations to an intermediate unit,*

school district or Area Vocational/Technical School for the charter's proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

School Calendar

See Attachment Cal: Calendar

- B. How will the Board of Trustees be selected?
- C. What steps will be taken to maintain continuity between the founding coalition's vision and the Board of Trustees?
- D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Board.

The Executive Team will be responsible to carry out the decisions of the Board of Directors, and will be accountable to the Board of Directors for the fulfillment of those responsibilities. This Team will set the example of team work that will be nurtured and developed in the staff, faculty and ultimately the students and families. No one person will be left with the "lion's share" of any project because everyone will cooperate to make the school work to the advantage of the students. We recognize that the design we have created is profoundly work intensive AND that the outcome for the students holds the potential to be the most rewarding work in cyber education to date. With this plan, students, paraeducators, administrators, faculty and staff will all have greater levels of measurable happiness, fulfillment and success. By design, every student, paraeducator, employee and board member will be supported, nurtured and developed.

The Board of Directors will provide governance and will be the policy-making authority of the school. They will meet monthly, abiding by the regulations set forth in the bylaws of the school and the Sunshine Act. All board meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. The Board meetings will be open to, and participation will be encouraged and fostered for staff, faculty, administrators, paraeducators, students and the public, except during executive sessions. This will provide our Board a well rounded and informed platform on which to base policy.

The Executive Team will answer to the Board of Directors. The Executive Team will be made up of the Executive Director, Executive Principal, Research and Development/Intellectual Property Manager, and. The Executive Team will provide support for the Special Education Director, Student Services Director, Financial Director, Development Director, Virtual Family Program Coordinator, Director of Supplemental Education, and the in house technology support team and guidance counselors. These school leaders will work as a team so that the needs of the students are met in the most stellar manner. This team will also provide modeling of teamwork for staff members within each of their departments.

- E. What steps will be taken to facilitate a productive relationship between administrators and teachers?

IDEA administrators are fostering productive relationships between administrators and teachers in a multitude of ways. At the very beginning, before school begins, IDEA's

first annual, one week Faculty-Staff Retreat will include opportunities to become acquainted, team building, orientation, training in 7-Habits, Love and Logic, Moral Intelligence, UbD, Constructivism and Differentiated Instruction; introduction to the teacher induction plan, committees and projects to sign up for and become acquainted with fellow members. Ongoing, IDEA Administrators will continue with Teacher Induction, in-services, cluster programs and trainings. Administrators are going to “keep their feet wet” teaching elective courses from time to time. The staff retreats will be held at the beginning and end of the first year and then annually thereafter. The philosophies, pedagogies and management style of the school function at every level to promote a strong and healthy, collaborative relationship between administrators and faculty as well as all other staff of the school.

- F. Discuss the nature of parental and student involvement in decision-making matters where appropriate.

Parents/paraeducators will be involved in the decision making regarding their children’s course of study at IDEA Cyber Charter School from the time of enrollment until graduation. They will also have many opportunities to give input into decisions that will affect their children while at IDEA. They will be welcome at Board Meetings and their opinions will be valued. Surveys, questionnaires and online polls will be conducted at the end of each marking and more often if needed to improve the quality of the school. The IDEA Parent Council will have an advisory role, and will be encouraged to participate in decision-making at IDEA.

Students will be involved in designing their curriculum to meet their academic and life goals. In addition they will all have opportunities to participate in setting up clubs based on their interests, goals and hobbies. Students will participate in designing and writing the school newspaper, creating field trip opportunities, prom, graduation, social opportunities at the clusters and many other things depending on student market demand.

- G. Submit copies of the school’s Articles of Incorporation, by-laws, and contracts and other documents required by applicable law. Requirements for the bylaws are as follows:

The bylaws must contain a provision for “failure to organize or neglect of duty”. Specifically, the bylaws must outline a removal procedure for the failure of a Board member to perform his or her duties as outlined in the Charter School Law. No Board member shall, as a private person, engage in any business transaction with the charter school of which he or she is a trustee, be employed in any capacity by the charter school of which he or she is a trustee, or receive from such charter school any pay for services rendered to the charter school. A charter school Board of Trustees shall have a designated treasurer who shall receive all funds including local, state and federal funds and privately donated funds. The treasurer shall also make payments out of the same on proper orders approved by the Board of Trustees, signed by the president or vice-president of the Board. The treasurer may pay out such funds on orders that have been properly signed without the approval of the Board first having been secured for the payment of amounts owing under any contracts which shall previously have been approved by the Board, and by which prompt payment the charter will receive a discount or other advantage.

Attachment: Bylaws
Attachment: Articles of Incorporation

Procedures for dismissal of an employee must be contained in the bylaws.

- H. Submit Board members' names, addresses, phone numbers and resumes.

- I. Submit copies of the school's management contracts, if any.

Explanation: Describe the effective governance model; consistency with the mission; clearly defined roles of the Board of Trustees; teacher, student and parent input in school decision-making; and the well-developed, viable management structure.

IV. FINANCE AND FACILITY

1. Financing:

- A. Develop a preliminary startup and operating budget. Use the attached Pennsylvania Department of Education budget templates; draft a preliminary operating budget covering all projected sources of revenue, both public and private, and planned expenditures.

A preliminary operating budget for the first year has been included the Appendix. The budget is based on revenues from the per-pupil allocation and state subsidies.

A preliminary operating budget for the fiscal year 2008-2009 has been developed and is attached as below. The budget is based on revenues from the per-pupil allocation and state subsidies. While there were no budget templates attached, IDEA Founders have researched and have, to the best of our ability created a budget based on the PA Manual of Accounts.

Attachment : IDEA Budget

- B. Develop a purchasing procedure that addresses a competitive way to purchase goods and services.

IDEAS' purchasing procedures will comply with section 1725-A of Charter School legislation. The goal of the financial procedures will be to provide flexibility while maintaining adequate controls and oversight. The Board of Directors will approve the financial budget and financial procedures. The treasurer will oversee the school's financial system and ensure that budgets are itemized per the Board's requirements. The Director of Finance will be authorized to spend up to \$499 for any single transaction. Expenditures from \$500 to \$10,000 will be permitted when allocated funds

are available. The Director of Finance and Board Treasurer will sign off on these expenditures. The Treasurer will check to ensure that competitive bids have been entertained where appropriate. Expenditures over \$10,000 must receive prior Board or Executive Committee approval. The Treasurer will report on the financial status to the Board of Directors at each meeting of the Board. The Board will develop additional procedures as the need arises.

Note: For additional financing procedures see Section 1725-A of the Charter School Law.

C. What fund raising efforts have occurred and/or are planned to generate capital or to supplement the per pupil allocations?

D. Describe the implementation of the following required financial procedures:

The Treasurer or the Designated Treasurer shall deposit the funds that belong to the charter school in a depository approved by the Board and shall, at the end of each month, make a report to the Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him/her during the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the treasurer shall be made in the name of the charter school. The Board shall invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice. Authorized types of investments for charter schools shall be:

- *United States Treasury bills.*
- *Short-term obligations of the United States Government or its agencies or instrumentalities.*
- *Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits or share account of institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the extent that such accounts are so insured, and for any amounts above the insured maximum, provided that approved collateral as provided by law therefore shall be pledged by the depository.*
- *Obligations of the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith of the Commonwealth, or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the political subdivision.*
- *Shares of an investment company registered under the Investment Company of America Act of 1940 (54 Stat.789, 15 U.S.C. * 80a-1 et seq.) as defined in PA 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.*

Note: All investments shall be subject to the standards set forth in PA 24PS-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.

The treasurer of the charter shall deposit the funds belonging to the charter school in a depository approved by the board and shall at the end of each month make a report to the Charter Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him or her during

the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the charter treasurer shall be made in the name of the charter school. The Board of Directors of IDEA Cyber Charter School will invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice. Authorized types of investments for charter schools shall be:

- *United States Treasury bills.*
- *Short-term obligations of the United States Government or its agencies or instrumentalities.*
- *Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits or share account of institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the extent that such accounts are so insured, and for any amounts above the insured maximum, provided that approved collateral as provided by law therefore shall be pledged by the depository.*
- *Obligations of the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith of the Commonwealth, or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the political subdivision.*
- *Shares of an investment company registered under the Investment Company of America Act of 1940 (54 Stat.789, 15 U.S.C. * 80a-1 et seq.) as defined in PA 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.*

Note: All investments shall be subject to the standards set forth in PA 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.

The school treasurer shall settle his accounts annually with the Board of School Directors before each year.

An annual audit shall be conducted according to the requirements of Article 24 of the School Code of 1949. Charter School Boards of Directors shall follow requirements set forth for school Boards in this section.

IDEA agrees to implement the following policies and procedures defined above.

Specifically, the following are examples of the proposed financial procedures the charter school will follow:

The school anticipates hiring a Director of Finance to provide the school with financial management services.

Budgets

No later than 90 days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1), the Director of Finance and the school administration will together prepare and submit to the Board of Directors a proposed budget ("Proposed Operating Budget") for the operation of the school during the ensuing school year. Each Proposed Operating Budget will set forth all of the revenues that the school anticipates will be received, a proposed schedule of fees and charges for services, and all of the expenditures

anticipated to be necessary for the operation of the school, both (1) during the ensuing school year and (2) during the succeeding two school years. Each Proposed Operating Budget will further set forth each category of expense, the sources and uses of funds, fund accounting income statement, cash flow, capital expenditures, and any other appropriate items, for the ensuing year and for the succeeding two years. Each Proposed Operating Budget will reflect the views of the school administration and Budget Manager of the most economical, reasonable methods of operating and maintaining the School during the years to which that Proposed Operating Budget relates.

The Board of Directors will, after reviewing and analyzing the Proposed Operating Budget, will communicate to the Budget Manager and the school administration any changes, additions or deletions it believes should be made in such Proposed Operating Budget. After making such changes the Board of Directors will then approve the Proposed Operating Budget.

It is understood, however, that each operating budget will be an estimate only and that unforeseen circumstance such as, but not limited to, the costs of labor, material, services and supplies, casualty, operation of law, or economic and market conditions may make adherence to the operating budget impracticable, and departures therefore may be required due to causes of the foregoing nature or for other business reasons. Accordingly, if revenues of the school for any year are less than budget or if the School will require any expense category to exceed the corresponding amount in the budget in any year, then the Board of Directors, school administration, and the Director of Finance will meet promptly to determine if an adjustment to the operating budget is necessary.

Financial Statements

The Director of Finance will report to the school's Board of Directors in writing monthly, for the proceeding month, with monthly balance sheets, statements of income and sources and uses of funds with respect to the School for such month and cumulatively for the fiscal year to date, as well as any recommended changes to the then-current approved operating budget that the Director of Finance considers necessary or appropriate. IDEAS' Board of Directors and the school's administration (the Director of Finance and other designated staff) will examine the monthly financial statements to ensure that the School is meeting or exceeding the annual approved budget for the fiscal year. The financial statements will be used as a tool to assist the Board of Directors and school administration in making decisions that ensure the school's financial viability while meeting the School's mission.

Audit

The Director of Finance will engage, on behalf of IDEA, a public accounting firm licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to perform an audit of the books and records maintained for the school in accordance with applicable regulations. This audit is to be completed and a report to be furnished within 90 days after the end of the School's fiscal year (June 30). The annual school audit will be conducted according to the requirements of Article 24 of the School Code of 1949, using the requirements set forth for school boards.

Operating Account

The Director of Finance will establish, on an agency basis for the School, one or more bank accounts, with mutually acceptable financial institutions (the "Operating Accounts"). The Director of Finance will cause all gross revenues to be deposited into the Operating Accounts, and cause all operating expenses (including, without limitation, payments of operating expenses, payroll, and payroll taxes) to be paid out of the Operating Accounts for and on behalf of the School. The Operating Accounts shall be used exclusively in connection with the operation of the school.

Working Capital

The Director of Finance shall provide assistance to the school to seek a line of credit facility with a financial institution to be utilized to fund seasonal or other cash flow deficiencies.

Payroll

The Director of Finance will provide accounting services for the School, including the following:

- Payroll services, including processing all payroll payments to employees, issuing W-2 statements and maintaining payroll records, payment of all Federal, State, and local payroll taxes, and all employee benefit expenditures
- Accounts payable services (including, but not limited to, the processing thereof)
- Accounts receivable services
- Maintaining accounting system records and reports
- Petty cash management
- Tracking of expenditures for furniture, fixtures and equipment

The School will employ appropriate on-site record keepers as necessary to provide the Director of Finance with operational data.

The school treasurer shall settle his or her accounts annually with the Board of Trustees for each school year. Pursuant to 24 P.S. §4-437, the accounts of the cyber charter school treasurer shall be audited annually.

2. Facility:

- A. Provide descriptions of and addresses for the physical facilities, including the administrative office, and the ownership of the facilities and any lease arrangements.

IDEA Headquarters are intended to open at 204 Schell Lane, Upper Providence, PA. This facility is owned by developer and builder, Gambone Brothers. John Crescenti, Jr., currently IDEA Founder who will become Director of Student Services and Facilities Operations has looked at numerous facilities in the south eastern part of the state and has selected this facility for the following reasons: Location, layout, sophisticated technology and telecommunications infrastructure already in place, lease amount will be

about 50-75% of the going lease rate for this area. This facility also has the ideal balance between warehouse space (that IDEA will need for curriculum materials, shipping and receiving and warehousing of other products and supplies) and administrative office space for the employees in the southeastern part of the state,

Attachment: Letter from commercial real estate broker, Joe Leone

Attachment: Letter from Leasing Agent John Morrell

IDEA's Western Campus will be located at the Johnstown Galleria, located at 500 Galleria Drive in Johnstown or an equivalent location available from the same owner.

- B. Explain how this site(s) would be a suitable facility for the proposed cyber charter school. Consider the necessity of renovation to the facility and compliance with applicable building codes and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Describe the services of the facility including heating, ventilating, lighting, sanitary conditions and water supply.

Neither the Upper Providence location nor the Johnstown location will need significant renovation. Neither will need renovation to be in compliance with applicable building codes and both are handicap/wheelchair accessible.

Both facilities have heat and air conditioning. The heat at the Upper Providence location is forced air natural gas. Both are equipped with air conditioning, proper and adequate lighting. There are both men's and women's restroom that are also handicap accessible. The Upper Providence facility is located in a relatively new business park that is well-kept and supplied with public water. Johnstown is located in a modern, well-kept mall and is also supplied with public water.

- C. Discuss the plan for maintaining the facility on a daily basis (custodial) and extended basis (facility maintenance).

Both the Johnstown and the Upper Providence locations have heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical, sewer as well as landscaping and snow removal which are all the responsibility of the owner/manager; smaller facility upkeep (light replacement, extermination and cleaning will be the responsibility of IDEA. IDEA will contract with a professional office cleaning company.

- D. Discuss any progress, partnership developments or other future steps towards acquisition of a facility/land.

IDEA Cyber Charter School has no plans to own property, as this is not an expenditure that school district monies can be used for.

- E. Describe facility-financing plans.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will pay the lease for both facilities from educational monies received from the districts and the state.

Explanation: Describe progress towards identifying and acquiring a school facility, with a back-up plan considering alternative facilities.

Because IDEA is not yet chartered the Founder's Board has not signed any leases or other agreements for land or facilities. The facilities mentioned here may have to change because landlords may have opportunities to lease them prior to the granting of IDEA's charter. In that case, we have identified, with the assistance of our leasing agents, other facilities that would also be acceptable and appropriate for the same uses described above with similar amenities.

3. Liability and Insurance

- A. Describe the proposed cyber charter school's insurance coverage plans, including health, general liability (including school operation, extra-curricular activities and parent volunteer activities), property, and Director and Officer's liability coverage (see Section 1727-A of the charter school legislation).

Explanation: Provide evidence of insurability in all areas identified above.

4. Child Accounting

- A. Describe the proposed cyber charter school's enrollment and attendance procedures.
Note: State child accounting procedures must be followed. (24 PS 13-1332)

Explanation: Cyber charter school funding is based on enrollment; therefore, a totally accurate child count is necessary to meet audit standards.

IDEA will follow all child accounting procedures as required by 24 PS 13-1332. In order to follow such required procedures, and to make sure that IDEA is tracking enrollment and attendance of its students at all times, IDEA will be using a variety of tools, including a student information system that tracks student activity in the program. Furthermore, BlackBoard will allow teachers and touchstones to be monitoring student access of curriculum. If BlackBoard detects that a student has not been active for two of the school days that student's learning plan indicates should be working days, the system will notify that student's touchstone and an intervention will take place.

At all times, IDEA will be able to report on each student's enrollment status and attendance status, as it relates to that student's CPI. As discussed above, students will be free to choose during which 180 days they want to work. Once they have made their choice, they will be expected to work on those 180 days. In the event that they miss three such days in a row, the IDEA staff member working with such student will immediately notify the Executive Director. The rationale of such reporting is to actively engage in cases of habitual truancy appropriately. A systemic response should be initiated only when a demonstrated pattern of truancy has been developed. If parents are neglectful in providing written excuses or do not meet such requirements in a timely fashion, reasonable allowances will be made to accept parent's explanations for their child's absences without initiating any punitive response.

V. ADMINISTRATION

1. Recruiting and Marketing Plan:

- A. Demonstrate how you will publicize the cyber charter school to attract a sufficient pool of eligible applicants.

The founders of IDEA have already begun the process of publicizing the IDEA Cyber Charter School by talking with prospective parents, students and teachers from throughout the state. This word of mouth campaign has created a great deal of interest and will help to attract a sufficient pool of eligible applicants. IDEA recognizes, however, that such word of mouth activities are not, by themselves, enough to attract sufficient candidates. IDEA is working with KCDL to ensure that the existing word of mouth campaign is combined with a sophisticated marketing plan to draw eligible applicants to apply to IDEA.

The IDEA marketing plan, which will build on the existing recognition created by the word of mouth campaign, uses a wide variety of marketing tools to build awareness for the school, and to attract applicants to the enrollment process. IDEA will use the following tools:

- ◆ Direct mailings to potential applicants
- ◆ Open houses to describe the benefits of IDEA to potential applicants
- ◆ Online advertising to attract applicants who are searching for an improved cyber charter experience
- ◆ Advertisements on radio and in local newspapers describing the advantages and features of IDEA
- ◆ An outbound calling group that will call individuals who have indicated via email or telephone that they are interested in IDEA
- ◆ A comprehensive public relations strategy which will build awareness of IDEA throughout the state by encouraging media outlets to report on the launch of IDEA

KCDL has used these approaches to build robust marketing plans in the states where it currently operates, and has been successful in attracting large pools of applicants. By carefully setting expectations in delivering the marketing messages about IDEA, IDEA and KCDL can ensure that there is not simply a large pool of applicants, but instead, a large pool of *appropriate* applicants.

The combination of the IDEA word of mouth campaign, with the sophisticated marketing plans developed by KCDL, we will ensure that IDEA will attract a sufficient pool of appropriate applicants.

- B. What type of outreach will be made to potential students and their families?

As described above, a variety of forms of outreach will be used to build awareness of IDEA with potential students and their families. One of the most important forms of outreach will be the open houses. IDEA staff, teachers and leaders will travel throughout the state, meeting with families who are interested in the IDEA approach to cyber chartering. Attendance in these open houses will be generated via the means described above. Direct mail pieces will have the dates and times of the open houses, customized for particular zip codes. For instance, a potential student in Philadelphia will receive a mailer that gives details at open houses in the Philadelphia area, not for those in Pittsburgh. Open house attendance will be supported by the calling group, as well. And KCDL has found that open houses are often of interest to local journalists.

At these open houses, IDEA staff will have a chance to engage with potential students and families and explain the unique benefits of IDEA. Staff will describe the pedagogical approach of IDEA, and will demonstrate the IDEA curriculum and technology. IDEA will have more than one open house in a particular area, so that families can attend repeated open houses to get their questions answered. KCDL has found that these open houses create a wonderful opportunity for potential students to really get a good sense about how their schools will provide them with a unique educational opportunity.

V. ADMINISTRATION (Continued)

Explanation: Develop a solid plan to attract sufficient students to operate a cyber charter school; publicize the cyber charter school; and ensure a match between the cyber charter school program and applicants' educational and personal needs.

2. Admissions Policy:

A. Describe the admission methods and eligibility criteria you will use to select students.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will enroll students as they apply without prejudice of any kind for any reason. The only eligibility criteria are that they are residents of Pennsylvania and their parents can demonstrate that with a lease, utility bills, mortgage or other evidence that they are Pennsylvania residents. All students who are Pennsylvania residents between the ages of 5 and 21 and have not yet graduate from high school may enroll in IDEA Cyber Charter School.

B. Explain administrative procedures to ensure compliance with laws pertaining to special education.

IDEA will comply with §17-1723-A of the Charter School Law and will accept all children who are residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, without prejudice, regardless of their disabilities. If a student is transferring to IDEA with an IEP, IDEA will implement the IEP of the transferring student or arrange for a review or re-

evaluation to consider revisions to the IEP. If the student does not currently have an IEP, and the parents wish to have the child evaluated for special education services, IDEA will follow the Screening Policy that is documented in the IDEA Special Education Policy and Procedures Manual.

Attachment: Screening Policy

C. Describe the timetable to be used for admitting students, including a plan for the admission lottery for students from both within and outside the district.

IDEA will begin enrolling students for the 2008-09 school year as soon as it is chartered, from throughout the state, until we have reached our 2,000 limit; at which time we will begin placing students on the waiting list and put our lottery in place.

In the event that more students apply than are slotted for their grades, those applying after the maximum has been reached will be placed in a lottery pool. As space becomes available, names will be drawn at random from the appropriate pool of qualified applicants.

Enrollment preference will be given to children of parents who have been on the Founding Coalition or who have worked in other capacities to help found IDEA, board members' children, staff and faculty children.

IDEA's Admission Process will be as follows:

1. Students will be able to complete Admission Request forms on line or print, complete and mail them to the school. These forms will contain information including child information, demographics, school history, and any other children from the same family who are applying.
2. Upon receipt of this information, either electronically or in hard copy, an enrollment packet will then be sent to the parents with all the forms needed to complete their IDEA enrollment including PDE Charter School Enrollment Notification Form, Medical and Dental forms, Permission forms, School Calendar, Placement Cluster Information with registration form to sign up for the one most convenient for the family – time and location wise. The enrollment packet will also include the IDEA Student Handbook, with a signature page to verify reading and understand along with commitment to adhere to policies of IDEA.

Students with disabilities will be treated the same as their non-disabled peers with accommodations to make it possible for them to participate in all the same activities according to their choices.

IDEA will comply with § 17-1723-A and enroll all eligible students who apply until the school census is at capacity. When the maximum number of students are in each class all students who apply will then be put into a lottery pool and when there is an opening

in the grade they are entering, names will be drawn at random for the next students to be enrolled.

IDEA is a year round school and will maintain the practice of rolling admissions, continuously filling the vacancies of exiting students with student from the lottery pools. As new students apply, they will fill in the spaces in grades with openings. If the class/grade is full, they will be placed in the lottery pool with an equal chance with every other student in their pool, to be chosen for the next admission.

D. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory fashion.

Explanation: Establish consistency with the mission of the school and the non-discriminatory policies for timely and realistic procedures for admitting students in accordance with charter school law (Section 1723-A).

The policies of IDEA Cyber Charter School are written in their entirety to be non-discriminatory and in fact welcoming and joyful about the privilege of serving and educating everyone. All children will be welcome, without prejudice for race, ethnicity, language spoken, country of origin, gender, sexual preference, religion or lack thereof, age up to the age of 21 for high school, pregnancy, parenting, place of residence or any other demographic factor, disability or severity of disability or any other characteristic until the school enrollment is capped.

Once enrollment is capped and closed we will begin arranging a waiting list. Students will be chosen to fill vacated slots randomly by lottery. Siblings of students already enrolled will be given priority. Children of Founders, Board members and employees will always be enrolled. Students will be considered to be actively enrolled until they withdraw from the school or are involuntarily withdrawn.

All students will be admitted and welcomed without prejudice. Those with physical disabilities or other disabilities that would make a Placement Cluster a difficult or impossible event to attend will take their assessments at locations that can accommodate their needs. Parents of all students known or even thought to be disabled will be given a copy of the appropriate guidelines and will be assigned to an instructional support team (IST) which will include their paraeducator and will provide the appropriate evaluations, arrange the meetings which can be held on-line or face to face. Changes in the IEP will take place as needed, evaluation will be current and all services and all programs will be provided as dictated in the IEP.

Because every student will take the NWEA MAP during their placement, these results will provide us with IDEA's first opportune event or time to conduct Child Find.

3. Human Resource Information:

- A. Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process of teachers, administrators, and other school staff.

The hiring of administrators will be conducted in accordance with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards. There are six standards included in this in this list.

1. A school administrator is an education leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaboration with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
5. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Additionally, administrators will be hired based on credentials, the results of the interview process which will include the need to clearly demonstrate a belief system consistent with the mission statement of IDEA Charter School.

Teachers will also be hired based on their credentials and the results of the interview process. Additionally, they will need to meet the certification requirements as specified by the Pa Department of Education. Teachers will also need to clearly demonstrate a belief system consistent with the mission statement of IDEA Charter School.

- B. What is the targeted staff size and teacher/student ratio?

The targeted staff size is 139 and teacher – student ratio of 1:25 (not counting special education teachers) and a touchstone – student ratio of 1:25 as well.

All staff and faculty will have the appropriate education, training and experience. All teachers will be highly qualified and certified through the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania in the area of the core courses they teach. All staff will be expected to meet the minimum job requirements of the positions for which they are applying.

We will place a high value on self-motivators, people with developed and advanced computer skills as well as people who have distinguished themselves as team players and leaders in their chosen groups.

IDEA representatives will participate in job fairs, and recruit graduating seniors and graduate students from colleges and universities throughout the state. We will work with organizations such as the Sierra Group, who can help place and train disabled workers and Troops to Teachers to broaden the perspectives and increase the diversity of our staff.

The Director of Human Resources will advertise, and take calls from all perspective applicants. The HR Director will collect all necessary documentation from each one, will hand the information to the appropriate, responsible department head or to the Executive Team for screening and decisions regarding whom to interview. The HR Director will then arrange the interviews; the Department Head or Executive Team will conduct impartial interviews and present two to three candidates, along with our recommendations for each position, to the Board of Directors who are responsible for hiring and firing of staff.

B. What is the targeted staff size and teacher/student ratio?

IDEA staff with a full census of 2,000 students include 60 teachers, 50 touchstones, 3 Executives (team), 7 Directors, 2 school counselors, school nurse and about 12 other support staff including secretaries, receptionist/library assistant, record specialist and other assistants. The teacher/student ratio is 1/33 with 8 special education teachers to start.

C. What professional development opportunities will be available to teachers and other staff?

Act 48 Professional Development courses will be offered at IDEA. Our Staff Retreat will include training opportunities; courses offered by PATTAN will be encouraged and liberally attended. All staff will have education dollars they can, and will be encouraged use to continue their professional development, ongoing online staff training for teachers, touchstones and paraeducators will be a hallmark of IDEA staff development.

D. Describe your human resource polices governing salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, and benefits.

The Board of Directors will have a Personnel Committee; Bylaw 3.8.1.d which shall establish criteria for the performance and evaluation of faculty and other employees of the school. This committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding salaries, bonuses and benefits.

IDEA CHARTER SCHOOL believes in creating a harmonious working relationship between all employees. In pursuit of this goal, IDEA CHARTER SCHOOL has created the following employee relations objectives:

1. Provide an exciting, challenging, and rewarding workplace and experience.
2. Select people on the basis of skill, training, ability, attitude, and character without discrimination with regard to age, sex, color, race, creed, national origin, religious persuasion, or a disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions.
3. Compensate all employees according to the quality of their work and of their relationship building with their students; their effort and contribution to the success of IDEA Cyber Charter School.
4. Review wages, employee benefits and working conditions regularly with the objective of being competitive in these areas consistent with sound business practices.
5. Provide sick leave, paid time off and holidays to all eligible employees.
6. Provide eligible employees with health benefits.
7. Take prompt and fair action on any complaint which may arise in the everyday conduct of our school, to the extent that is practical.
8. Respect individual rights, and treat all employees with courtesy and consideration.
9. Maintain mutual respect in our working relationship.
10. Keep all employees informed of the progress of IDEA CHARTER SCHOOL, as well as the school's overall goals and objectives.
11. Promote an atmosphere in keeping with IDEA Cyber Charter School's Charter School's vision, mission, and goals.

See Attachment : Teacher Salary Step Plan

E. Identify the proposed faculty.

The proposed faculty will consist of individuals with degrees and certification appropriate for the courses they are applying to teach. We intend to draw teachers, as students, from every area of the Commonwealth. Teachers will be hired without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual preference, national origin and color.

Executive Director – CV Attached
Executive Principal – Resume' Attached

Director of Special Education – Resume' Attached

Director of Student Resources – Georgette King
Director of Student Services – Resume Attached
Director of Finance – Greg Barr
Director of Development – Ken Geary
Director of Personnel – Carla Bravar
Director of Supplemental Education Services –

Psychologist – CV Attached

Teachers – 11 highly qualified, certified in core area interested before advertising
Touchstones – 7 interested before advertising

- F. Attach a report of criminal history record, pursuant to Section 111 of the Public School Code for all individuals seeking the charter who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.

Some Criminal History Clearances are attached; the remainder will be presented to the PDE at the Defense of the Application in December.

- G. Attach an official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa. C.S. Chapter 63 subchapter C. 2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.

Some are Childline Clearances are attached; the remainder will be presented at the PDE at the Defense of the Application in December.

- H. What procedures have been developed, through research of NCLB guidelines, that ensure the hiring of certified, highly qualified teachers and other professional staff?

Explanation: Establish high professional standards for teachers and other staff; commitment to professional development of staff; and working conditions and compensation packages that will attract and retain quality staff as per compliance with labor laws.

Like NCLB, IDEA holds and requires high standards for all staff and faculty. NCLB mandates apply to all students not just those served by federal programs. NCLB requires all teachers to be “highly-qualified” in all core academic subjects (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography) that they teach. All IDEA teachers will be highly qualified before they teach at IDEA Cyber Charter School. To be considered highly qualified, teachers must meet the following minimum criteria:

A college degree

Full certification or licensure

Demonstrated content knowledge in the subject they teach. This can be fulfilled by the following: new elementary teachers must pass a state literacy or numeracy test; new secondary teachers must either pass a rigorous test in their subject area or have a college major in the subject area; veteran teachers may either pass the state test, have a college major or demonstrate content knowledge through a High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE).

All teachers at IDEA will have completed a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in elementary education with a focus on the curriculum they intend to teach. All special education teachers will be expected to teach and will therefore be required to have passed their Praxis exams. All teachers will either have passed their Praxis or will be working on passing it. To be hired all teachers will be required to provide the results/copies of their Praxis, Diplomas, Transcripts, certifications. They will also be required to provide at least two references. Each applicant seeking a position in the academic side of the school will be asked to read the philosophy and pedagogy of IDEA and to write a short paper demonstrating an understanding of the mission of IDEA and how they will apply it to their teaching methods and style.

See Attachment: Administrator – Teacher Assessment Information

Medical, dental, employee assistance, vision, long term disability, life insurance and retirement benefits through PSERS, a wellness program, credit union membership and Costco membership. In addition, the work environment at IDEA Cyber Charter School will be nurturing, supportive and one in which everyone is humanized and encouraged to apply their genius to the practice of their professions and work. An on-site staff day care and tutoring center for the children of employees will be a huge attraction for young, energetic, employees who are also committed to the nurturing of their own children and families.

See Attachment : IDEA Cyber Charter School Employment Packet

IDEA's employment packet is the evidence of our rigorous compliance with NCLB in hiring practices.

To maintain our highly qualified and exceptional teaching staff, IDEA has created a work environment that is very desirable:

Teachers work from home most of the time with state of the art equipment and technology.

Year round education teaching in teams.

200 Day Bonus

An outstanding benefit package

The opportunity to work in a research-based educational environment

The opportunity to teach in ways to increase the student success

The opportunity to treat each student as a valuable individual and to be allowed to teach with creativity.

Training will be scheduled so that teachers can bring their children and their needs will be met in lots of fun and interesting ways.

A competitive pay package

V. ADMINISTRATION (Continued)

4. Code of Conduct:

- A. Discuss any rules or guidelines governing student behavior.
- B. Describe your school's policies regarding student expulsion and suspension, including students with disabilities.

- C. Describe your school's mandatory student attendance plan and its fit with the code of conduct.

Explanation: Provide evidence that the founders inspire the confidence of their targeted community; program provides an attractive educational alternative to students and parents; and community support extends beyond the core group of founders. Expectation for student behavior is clear and specific processes for disciplinary actions are established.

5. Timetable:

- A. Provide a detailed timetable of projected steps and dates leading to the opening of a charter school.

Explanation: Establish a well-developed, realistic plan of action for opening a charter school.

6. Safety:

- A. Submit written documentation of intent to comply with all applicable safety requirements, including the following to demonstrate the safety and structural soundness of the school:

- Inspection by a local building inspector.

IDEA's Headquarters will be leased in facilities that are designed and intended for professional offices with warehouse space included. IDEA's Western Campus will be located in a shopping facility to make it assessable to as many students as possible. IDEA Cyber Charter School will obtain the appropriate documentation from the lessors and the townships where the facilities are located; documenting the completion of safety inspections having determined that the facility is structurally safe and habitable.

- Inspection by a local fire department.

IDEA will obtain certification that a fire inspection has been completed and that the premises are safe from fire dangers.

- Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school.

IDEA will obtain approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught during labs and clusters.

IDEA Cyber Charter School will not store or use explosives or flammable compounds or liquids used in connection with labs and clusters.

- Compliance with all other federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations.
- Application for certificates, licenses, etc. are part of the planning process.

IDEA has discussed with the lessors, the townships and other licensing authorities the process involved in obtaining the same. We have also sought out mentors among people who have done similar things before us.

Note: All necessary certificates and occupancy permits must be issued and in effect prior to the opening of the charter school. Preliminary clearances on all these requirements should be obtained prior to a lease being executed.

All necessary certificates and occupancy permits will be obtained and in effect prior to IDEA assuming occupancy of the buildings. Preliminary clearances on all safety requirements have been discussed with the lessors and will be obtained prior to a lease being executed.

7. School Health Services

- A. Describe your plan for providing school health services as required under Article XIV of the public school code.

IDEA will provide for school health services as required under Article XIV of the Public School Code.

IDEA will employ one full time Registered Nurse (RN) for every 1,400 students and one Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) or medical technician with the approval of the Secretary of Health. If times occur when IDEA is not able to hire a nurse we will contract with a nurse with a civil service status under a municipal corporation regionally located near our students to perform the duties listed herein. The school nurse will also be responsible to maintain needed health records on employees. No person with transmittable TB will be hired by IDEA in accordance with 24§ PS 1418.

Medical and Dental Questionnaires, suitable for diagnostic purposes, furnished by the Secretary of Health will be sent to each child enrolling in IDEA in their enrollment packet with an explanation that these forms must be completed for their child to be enrolled. If, for whatever reason, parents prefer these forms to be completed by the school nurse/physician an exam will be scheduled for said children at the Placement Cluster. If immunizations are needed and families are unable to pay for them, arrangements will be made with the regional Public Health Department to provide

immunizations for the students who need them. If other medical or surgical follow up is needed for a student and the family is not able to pay for the needed services, IDEA's nurse will assist the family in contacting the County Assistance or Department of Public Welfare for a medical card to cover the cost of the needed medical or dental care.

Whether by a physician of their choice or by the school nurse/physician, , these exams will include a complete physical and a vision screening, hearing screening, height, weight, TB test, and such other tests as the Advisory Health Board may deem advisable to protect the health of the child. The nurse/physician shall make sure that a medical examination and a comprehensive appraisal of the health of every child of school age is documented in the nurse's files:

- ✓ Upon original entry into the school
- ✓ While in 6th grade
- ✓ While in 11th grade
- ✓ Prior to the issuance of a farm or domestic service permit unless the child has been given a scheduled or special medical examination within the preceding four months.

Vision screening will be done annually; all other tests at intervals established by the Advisory Health Board.

All medical and dental exams may be performed by family doctors and dentists at the family's or their insurance company's expense so long as the approved and appropriate forms are submitted to the school nurse before the scheduled appointment with the school doctor or dentist.

These questionnaires will become part of each student's school health record. The RN will be responsible to maintain a comprehensive health record which shall include test results, measurements and regularly scheduled examinations and special examinations as required under Article XIV of the Public School Code. The student's health records will be made available to the physician.

IDEA's Student Health Program will comply and conform to approved medical and dental practices and will permit valid statistical appraisals of the various components of the program.

Dental Exams and Dental Hygiene services will be provided to every student during the Placement Cluster when they are enrolled and:

- ✓ While in 3rd grade
- ✓ While in 7th grade

The school physician and the school dentist shall conduct medical, dental and other examinations in rooms set aside for these purposes at the Placement Clusters. These rooms will be equipped with adequate facilities and with such other accessories as may be required by the Secretary of Health for the thorough examination of children. The School physician shall require the removal of sufficient clothing to insure complete examination.

At each physician's examination of a child a nurse will assist. At every dental examination the dental hygienist will assist. If a nurse and/or hygienist are not available a trained assistant shall be present. Parents will participate as well. Medical examinations will be done in the presence of the patient's/student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Recommendations of medical, surgical or dental care will be sent to the family physician and/or dentist of each child on forms obtained from the Secretary of Health with instructions to the parent or guardian to consult the family physician or family dentist and to notify the school nurse of the steps taken regarding the recommendations.

The school nurse will inform teachers of the health conditions of students where those conditions may affect behavior, appearance or scholastic performance.

The school nurse will file all reports required by the regulations by the Secretary of Health and/or the PDE. All student health records received, established and maintained at IDEA will be confidential, and their contents shall be divulged only when necessary for the health of the child or at the request of the parent or guardian to a physician legally qualified to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathy or osteopathic surgery in Pennsylvania.

In the case of children who enroll at IDEA, who previously attended other schools, the school RN will request (or direct her qualified agent) to request the medical/ school health records from the previous school who is by law required to surrender the health record of the student. IDEA will not destroy student health records for a period of at least two years after the student ceases to be enrolled. The nurse may also surrender student health records or a portion thereof to the parents or guardians if the child does not enroll or re-enroll in another school in PA.

If any student or their family objects to medical or dental examination or treatment they will not be compelled to do so provided that the exemption from medical or dental examination shall be based on religious or discrimination grounds and are approved by the Secretary of Health.

IDEA will at all times cooperate with the Secretary of Health and with the Secretary of Education regarding the Student Health Services Department at IDEA.

B. Describe how school nursing services, including administration of medication, will be delivered.

While Article XIV, Public School Code of 1949, Title 24 School Health Services does not delineate administration of medication IDEA has established the following policy:

- When children are in the homes of their parents it will be between the parent and the child's physician to determine and decide on modality, time and dosage of medication administration

- When a student's paraeducator is not their parent/guardian, a doctor's note will be on file in the Nurse's Records and with the Paraeducator. This will be required at the Placement Cluster for all daily, ongoing medications. For medications prescribed for a limited amount of time, i.e., antibiotics and some allergy medications, cold medications and the like, the parent must scan or fax and send a hard copy of the doctor's note to the school and leave one with the paraeducator. The doctor's note (for both chronic and acute conditions) must include the student's name, the name of the medication, the dose, time of administration the mode of administration (po, im, inhaler, etc.) and the duration of time that the medication is to be administered over. The school nurse must receive the scanned or faxed copy before the student may return to their paraeducator for school work.
- In addition to the physician's note, the parent must also complete a form stating that the paraeducator may administer the medications stated on the physician's note.
- The parent must provide the medication in the bottle/container that it came in. Aspirin cannot be given to the paraeducator in a baggie or any other container than the bottle that it came in with the name of the medication clearly marked, along with the times, doses and other pertinent information.
- When the parents or guardian(s) are not the paraeducator, a form provided by IDEA must be completed with all relevant medical information the child would need were they to have to go to the hospital. This form should be framed in some way and placed near the phone closest to where the student works.
- The school nurse will follow up with all paraeducators who are giving medications during the course of the medication administration.
- The school nurse will follow up to be sure the IDEA Medical Information Form is completed and in place where the student works for every child whose oversight is by a paraeducator rather than parent/guardian.

All IDEA medical records will be kept in a locked heavy duty filing cabinet, will be kept confidential and the information will only be dispensed in accordance with Act XIV, Public School Code of 1949.

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER
to operate a cyber charter school known as
IDEA Cyber Charter School

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and specifically under 24 P.S. §17-1745-A, the Board of Trustees of the IDEA Cyber Charter School is hereby granted a Charter to operate a cyber charter school located at 437 W. Valley Forge Rd., King of Prussia 19406, for the period commencing on _____ and ending on _____. The grant of this charter was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education on _____.

It is specifically understood and agreed between the signatories hereto that:

- 1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the cyber charter school in accordance with the provisions of 24 P.S. §§17-1741-A through 17-1751-A , any amendments thereto enacted during the term of this charter and any regulations or standards applicable to cyber charter schools;
- 2) the granting of this charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the cyber charter school in strict adherence to the terms of the Application submitted by the Board of Trustees and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the State Charter School Appeal Board. Said Application is attached hereto as **Appendix A** and is incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth;
- 3) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement for the term set forth above and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this Charter;
- 4) this Charter may be renewed for additional periods of five (5) years duration and upon any such renewal, a new Charter shall be executed by the parties; and
- 5) this Charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this _____ of 2007.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

ATTEST:

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Gerald L. Zahorchak, Secretary