

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Essential Information Form**

Name of Proposed School	West Denver Prep SMART Northwest
School Type (Select One)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charter School <input type="checkbox"/> Performance School
Grade Configuration	9-12
Model or Focus (e.g., Arts, College Prep, etc)	College Prep
Proposed Region for School	Northwest Denver
Primary Contact Person	Chris Gibbons, CEO

**Enrollment Projections.**

GRADE	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
9	140	140	140	140	140
10		126	126	126	126
11			120	120	120
12				114	114
<b>Total # students</b>	140	66	386	500	500

	FRL %	SPED %	ELL %
Proposed Demographics	92%	10%	45%

1. Is the applicant an existing operator applying to replicate its current school(s)? Yes
2. Does the school expect to contract with an education service provider (ESP), education management organization (EMO), or other organization for a substantial portion of school management/operation? No

## **Executive Summary Narrative.**

**I. Culture** Through a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability, West Denver Prep Science, Math, and Arts Academy (SMART) Northwest prepares scholars in grades nine through twelve for purposeful social agency to and through graduation from four-year colleges and universities. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will be located in Northwest Denver, in close proximity to the current West Denver Prep Lake and Highland middle school campuses.

Scholars learn more successfully within a strong culture of achievement where they feel immediately accountable to themselves, their peers, and their educators. At the center of this culture are the STRIVE Core Values: Scholarship, Teamwork, Respect, Intelligence, Virtue, and Effort. Educators explicitly teach behaviors related to these values at all times, as a part of the regular academic program. The statement of values includes simple descriptions of behaviors so scholars fully understand these values. Every portion of the Educational Plan, including meals, classes, transitions, SMART Advisory and Seminar, Morning Meeting, Community Meeting, and co-curricular and athletic activities includes opportunities to support the STRIVE Core Values.

West Denver Prep has thoroughly engaged its current NW Denver families over the past three months in the design, planning, and application for SMART Northwest. School leadership has spoken with teachers, students, and parents in considerable detail about this proposal, and resulting in 321 letters of intent to enroll.

**II. Leadership** West Denver Prep seeks leaders with strong mission compatibility, resolute work ethic and determination, cultural competence, proven leadership skills, and proven skills raising student achievement significantly while working with similar students. After a national search, West Denver Prep has selected Kate Schrepfer as the school leader for this school, after completion of West Denver Prep's Leader-in-Training program during the 2012-2013 school year.

**III. Education Plan** Through a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest prepares scholars in grades nine through twelve for purposeful social agency to and through graduation from four-year colleges and universities.

The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educational design emanates from the most innovative and proven instructional techniques at the secondary level. In fact, educators and researchers agree that recent developments in rigorous curriculum design and planning have the capacity to place even the most underserved educational communities on the trajectory to and through college (Dobbie & Fryer Jr., 2009). Academic achievement and growth linked to critical thinking within core academic subjects is the primary means by which we meet our educational program goal. Due to our intensive single-track college preparatory curriculum, all scholars benefit from urgent pacing and time on task instruction in the Undergraduate House (7 classes X 55 minutes), while the Graduate House (4 classes X 105 minutes) leverages direct instruction with the inquiry-based setting of the Harkness Method (Socratic Seminar). Additionally, all scholars follow our Advanced Placement Course Sequence which leads to a full schedule of AP courses by senior year.

Simply put, all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars benefit from our challenging and relevant liberal arts curriculum that extends foundational core academic knowledge and skills into higher order and critical thinking ones.

**IV. Teaching** Evaluation of educators is the responsibility of the School Director. The School Director observes educators informally on a weekly basis, provides written feedback of strengths and challenges, and a conference if necessary. The School Director also observes each educator formally three times a year, completing a detailed observation protocol for a full-period observation. Twice a year, educators formally meet with their School Director for a mid-year review, where performance is discussed with respect to the formal evaluations and the scholar performance data. Educators will also receive regular classroom evaluations and curriculum conferences with their respective Dean of Instruction. Teacher and administrator evaluations are tied directly to the goals on the accountability plan.

West Denver Prep is committed to the ongoing professional development of its employees. Formal professional development opportunities are offered throughout the year in the summer, daily, weekly, and every six weeks. Faculty will also participate in technology training and leadership development.

All West Denver Prep staff will attend Summer Institute before the start of the school year. In the first year, all faculty will complete a four week program. In future years, returning faculty will complete a two-week summer induction program and new faculty will complete a three-week program. For educators new to the school, the first week of this program is committed to review instructional policies and procedures, professional development specific to curriculum design and daily instructional practices, and school administrative systems.

**V. Governance** The West Denver Prep Board structure is specifically designed to ensure that the school is an educational and operational success. By attracting members of specific skill sets and areas of expertise, the Board ensures that they have fast access to the resources needed to support the school. By adopting a clear accountability plan for the school's academic program, the Board guarantees a simple, focused, and clear evaluation that is directly aligned to the DPS Performance Framework. Strong financial and facility knowledge ensures support in the areas that most commonly limit charter school operations.

The board receives academic, other student, and financial reports monthly. The school dashboard includes enrollment, attendance, discipline, persistence, performance assessment, and grade information as well as reports on specific student or personnel situations. The board considers all of this information with the CEO and together make plans for corrective action where necessary.

West Denver Prep is a mission-driven organization in all regards. Key decisions at the board level are regularly referenced against the mission of the school and dialogue about priorities nearly always centers around the mission.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Current Professional Title and Organization</b>	<b>Board Role</b>	<b>Focus/Experience</b>
John Aragon	Retired, former Vice President of Government Affairs for Comcast Cable	Member	Educational opportunities for at-risk youth, Diversity in the workplace
Michael Barkin	Vice President, KRG Capital Partners	Treasurer	Financial oversight, Strategic planning
Moira Cullen	Partner, The Capstone Group	Vice-President	Education policy, Public affairs
Judith Garcia	Einstein Bagels	Southwest Parent Council Representative	Quality education
Shelley Gomez	University of Colorado at Boulder	Member	Higher Education, Post-secondary planning, Educational access
Chris Henderson	Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Economic Recovery under Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar	Member	Financial oversight, Strategic planning, Board development
Kim Knous-Dolan	Associate Director, Donnell-Kay Foundation	Secretary	Education reform and policy, Funding and development
Jerry Lassos	Professional Developer, Denver Public Schools	Member	Educator professional development, Multicultural education, Curriculum and instruction
Alexander Ooms	Partner, ClearCreek Partners	Member	Strategic planning, Organizational capacity, Teacher compensation and retention
Maria Sierra-Mendoza	Mile High Ministries/ Joshua Station	Northwest Parent Council Representative	Quality education, Human services
Keith Trammell	Attorney, Hogan Lovells	Member	Law, Organizational strength

I. Finance

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of Students					
Per Pupil Revenue	\$ 972,828	\$1,848,373	\$2,682,225	\$3,474,385	\$3,474,385
Grant Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Private Funds	\$ 250,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Sources	\$ 123,887	\$ 235,384	\$ 341,573	\$ 442,452	\$ 442,452
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$1,346,714	\$2,283,757	\$3,023,798	\$3,916,837	\$3,916,837
Employee Salaries (including benefits)	\$ 765,063	\$1,409,502	\$1,816,260	\$2,463,090	\$2,489,709
Building Expenses	\$ 96,440	\$ 181,616	\$ 262,736	\$ 339,800	\$ 339,800
Services/Supplies	\$ 435,235	\$ 589,235	\$ 710,093	\$ 690,208	\$ 645,008
Other Expenditures	\$ 8,690	\$ 15,557	\$ 22,877	\$ 27,950	\$ 27,950
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$1,305,428	\$2,195,910	\$2,811,966	\$3,521,049	\$3,502,467
<b>NET INCOME</b>	\$ 41,287	\$ 87,847	\$ 211,833	\$ 395,788	\$ 414,370
<b>TABOR Reserve</b>	\$ 36,685	\$ 32,266	\$ 25,016	\$ 23,765	\$ -
<b>Contingency Reserve</b>	\$ 4,602	\$ 55,581	\$ 186,817	\$ 372,024	\$ 414,370
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

As a network, West Denver Prep has set an ambitious three-year fundraising goal to support growth efforts. We have secured approximately 75% of that goal through three-year commitments from the following foundations:

Daniels Fund	Anschutz Foundation
Charter School Growth Fund	Piton Foundation
The Walton Foundation	Gates Family Foundation
Gates Family Foundation	Carson Foundation
Walton Family Foundation	Foundation for Great Schools

## Section I. CULTURE

### A. Mission Statement

Through a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability, West Denver Prep Science, Math, and Arts Academy (SMART) Northwest prepares scholars in grades nine through twelve for purposeful social agency to and through graduation from four-year colleges and universities.

### B. Targeted Student Population

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will continue to serve a representative population of Northwest Denver, namely our scholars who attend the Highland and Lake Campuses are primarily from the Sloan's Lake, Berkley, West Colfax, Sun Valley, Jefferson Park, Sunnyside, Highland, and West Highland neighborhoods. The current population for both schools is approximately 96% students of color, 91% FRL, 13% SPED, and approximately 37% English Language Learners . West Denver Prep SMART Northwest intends to remain focused on Northwest Denver. The demand for entering scholars in 9<sup>th</sup> grade is a direct response to the desire and passion of our current parents to continue their child's education through grades 9-12.

According to the Call for New Quality Schools regional needs' analysis, the Northwest Region includes the following demographics identified as high need:

- 85% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch
- 89% of students are minority students
- 50% of students are learning English as a second language
- 12% of students are Special Education students

Additionally, 46% of students in the Northwest Region are attending schools that are not meeting expectations on the SPF in either achievement or growth. At the high school level, only 645 students – out of a total 7,460 students in the region – are attending schools that meet expectations based on SPF overall scores. In a summary of needs for the Northwest Region, DPS recognizes the need for new school models that could dramatically increase student performance.

West Denver Prep has been operating its Lake and Highland middle schools in the Northwest Region for two years and our high-performing model has proven very effective for dramatically increasing student achievement outcomes among the neighborhood student population. Our school culture emphasizes personal responsibility, high academic achievement, and, above all, preparation for scholars to graduate from four-year colleges and universities. As such, we have determined that education provision beyond the middle grades is an obligatory element to ensuring our scholars' entrance to college without the need for academic remediation for each of our scholars.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest intends to request priority enrollment for graduates of West Denver Prep Lake and Highland, preference for siblings, followed by priority enrollment for residents of the Northwest quadrant in consultation with district priorities.

### C. School Culture

Scholars learn more successfully within a strong culture of achievement where they feel immediately accountable to themselves, their peers, and their educators. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest creates this atmosphere through consistent and clear expectations, regularly communicating pride in the school community through the SMART Advisory and Seminar, daily

Morning Meetings, and weekly Community Meetings during which scholars and educators are responsible for sharing out academic material. All aspects of the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest culture focus on acknowledging and fostering school-wide academic excellence and purposeful social agency.

At the center of this culture are the **STRIVE Core Values: Scholarship, Teamwork, Respect, Intelligence, Virtue, and Effort**. Educators explicitly teach behaviors related to these values at all times, as part of the regular academic program. The statement of values includes simple descriptions of behaviors so scholars fully understand these values. Every portion of the Educational Plan, including meals, classes, transitions, SMART Advisory and Seminar, Morning Meeting, Community Meeting, and co-curricular and athletic activities includes opportunities to support the STRIVE Core Values.

Scholars are evaluated daily and weekly on the STRIVE Rubric System (SRS). The rubric consists of an evaluation tool measuring effective implementation of the behaviors described in detail in the school's discipline policy. Scholars earn daily consequences or opportunities based on their behavior and they will also receive a weekly summary from their advisor. Scholars who consistently receive high scores on the SRS are entitled to special recognition at the Community Meeting and can earn ancillary privileges, such as weekly awards, field trips, different uniform shirts, and Free Dress Days.

**Morning Meeting** is a fifteen-minute community gathering held at the start of every school day. Led by School Leadership in conjunction with SMART scholars, Morning Meeting is an opportunity for the entire community to focus on the tasks at-hand for the day. Scholars also speak and co-lead the Morning Meeting at least twice a week, working with educators to present inspiring stories, lessons, and quotations in order to focus the work at hand on the Core Values of the school community. Time for scholar praise is included in the Morning Meeting; and in doing so, scholars learn to notice and celebrate the exemplary qualities of one another. Lastly, any scholar who wants to make public amends for an unjust choice is given an opportunity during the Morning Meeting.

**Community Meeting** takes place every Friday afternoon. Academic celebration is the focus of Community Meeting. Scholars creatively present material learned in their classes and educators give presentations of learning as appropriate. Each week, a West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholar from each grade level is honored for exemplary demonstration of character, academic performance, and exceptional effort, by receiving the Ocelotl Warrior Award. The Ocelotl Warrior Award is awarded by faculty vote for a scholar who has best demonstrated the STRIVE Core Values. The Ocelotl Warrior Award is presented at the conclusion of the Community Meeting, made by educators who have worked closely with these scholars. The Ocelotl Warrior Award is presented to further develop a community of valuing individual scholars and rewarding exemplary behavior.

**The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Advisory** builds off our highly successful middle school model, whereby educators utilize school-wide monitoring systems to evaluate scholarly progress for homework completion, organizational preparedness, academic achievement and success, communication with parents, and issues related to maximizing learning. The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Advisory is fully-integrated into the daily schedule for grades 9-12, and it meets every other day for thirty minutes.

**The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Seminar**, inspired by the Great Books Program, utilizes literary texts to explicitly discuss and model the character traits for our STRIVE Core Values.

Scholars evaluate assigned readings, focus on STRIVE themes and ethics raised in these literary texts, and they arrive to seminar prepared to discuss two thematic talking points every other day for 30 minutes. As part of the gradual release of responsibility, scholars will have 60 minutes in the Graduate House with increased levels of responsibility and accountability for facilitating and leading discussion and response to literary and cultural texts.

**The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Congreso<sup>1</sup>** is our collaborative leadership model whereby all stakeholders work in unison to ensure that we meet and exceed our institutional objectives in an equitable and professional manner. Stakeholders are divided into congresos, and they focus their attention and discussion exclusively on how we meet or exceed our educational program goals:

<b>West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Collaborative Leadership Model: The SMART Congresos Two Talking-Points Agenda for All Meetings [45 Minutes]</b>	
1.) How do we maximize scholarly learning, intellectual engagement, and exemplary learning products?	
2.) How do we provide authentic opportunities for purposeful social agency and civic engagement?	
SMART Congreso de Padres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets after school on the second Wednesday of each month.</li> <li>• School Director facilitates two-point agenda, tracks information and feedback, and implements next steps.</li> </ul>
SMART Congreso de Escolares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets every other Friday for 30 minutes.</li> <li>• SMART Advisors facilitate two-point agenda, track information and feedback, and implement next steps.</li> </ul>
SMART Congreso de Liderazgo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets on the last Friday of each month.</li> <li>• Dean of Instruction facilitates two-point agenda, tracks information and feedback, and implements next steps.</li> </ul>
SMART Colectivo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegates from each congreso meet before school on the second Friday of each month.</li> </ul>

Lastly, the School Director will host an open *cafecito*<sup>2</sup> and school tour on the first Wednesday morning of each month from 8:00A.M. - 9:00A.M. This is an opportunity to meet informally with stakeholders, outside school educators and administrators, and community members to share the mission, vision, and practice of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest.

**The Everyday Life of a SMART Scholar.** Each morning, this West Denver Prep SMART Northwest freshman scholar is greeted at the door of her school by a firm handshake and warm greeting from a staff of dedicated educators, fiercely committed to doing whatever is necessary to hold her accountable to the highest standards of academic excellence. Each morning, she and her school mates attend

<sup>1</sup> The congreso has its origins in Pre-Columbian México: a system of governance whereby local homes and communities (*kalpullis*) hold forum to discuss issues relevant to the livelihood of the city-state (*altepetl*). The underlying principle of the congreso leadership model is to ensure inclusiveness, civic engagement, and equity among a community focused on a collective goal (Leon-Portilla, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> The Cafecito, an informal meet-and-greet with community stakeholders over coffee, is an effective cultural practice among numerous high-performing charter high schools with similar student populations: Hawthorne Math and Science Academy (CA), Lennox Math, Science, and Technology Academy (CA), and Ánimo Leadership Academy (CA).



Morning Meeting where they fully awaken to the percussive rhythm of the *huehuetl*<sup>3</sup>, an invocation of their scholarly past, present, and future. She is one of several hundred exceptional children at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest – exceptional not for their privilege or life circumstances, but rather for their unusual hard work, incomparable respect, and the unwavering high standards they experience inside of these doors.

This scholar is reminded of such rigorous accountability during each of her regular, Six-Week Interim Assessments (IA’s). Designed as intermediate measures that evaluate mastery of state standards, these tests give this scholar, her educators, and her family immediate, clear feedback on where she has excelled in her study of science, mathematics, reading, writing, and where more diligence is required. She now understands, as she will in each of her subsequent years here, that unsatisfactory academic performance leads to STRIVE Study Hall tutorials where her devoted educators painstakingly review material with her, while proficient scores lead to afternoons participating in extracurricular activities, covering such subjects and clubs as poetry, journalism, drama, and film studies.

This scholar knows that she is accountable to her peers for her learning as well. Today, she is one of several scholars presenting her comparative analysis on the themes of freedom and identity found within the work of Emily Dickinson and Lorna Dee Cervantes. In the week of preparation, she has mastered analyzing texts for thematic similarities and differences, public-speaking skills, and the rigorous advocacy for herself that such a presentation entails. The accountability she feels toward her peers is reflective of her accountability to her school community, and ultimately, of her accountability to herself for her success.

**D. Parent and Community Involvement**

West Denver Prep has a vibrant Parent Council at both the Lake and Highland Campuses. This group meets the statutory requirements for an Advisory Council with an educator representative, two community leaders, and three elected parent representatives. Many more parents have participated in this council, which has been responsible for planning special events, organizing parent conferences, providing feedback on the school’s academic program and communications, and engaging parents in academic workshops to assist them in supporting their children. The Parent Council is unanimously and enthusiastically in favor of this expansion effort.

**Parent Engagement.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest implements an extremely personalized and meaningful Parent Engagement Plan. Due to the detailed nature of the high school design elements, West Denver Prep Lake and Highland parents will learn about them in a step-by-step process leading up to the school’s opening on August 12, 2013.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Parent Engagement Plan		
Timeline	Outreach and Engagement Activities	Design Elements
<p><u>2012</u></p> <p>January</p> <p>February</p> <p>March</p>	<p>▪HSD will attend all remaining Parent Council Meetings; maintain attendance logs; communicate regularly with parents through a hard and digital format; identify and cultivate parent leadership prior to SMART opening; invite parents to share testimony at the DPS Board Presentation; roll out West Denver</p>	<p>▪SMART College Prep Factor</p> <p>▪SMART Academic Scope and Sequence</p> <p>▪SMART Academic and School Culture</p>

<sup>3</sup> *huehuetl*- The Nahuatl word for “ancient” is an upright, percussive, and hand-carved instrument. The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest *huehuetl* calls the scholarly community together within the public space to share information and discourse.

April May	Prep SMART Northwest Logo, Seal, Mascot, and Uniforms.	
June July August	▪HSD will conduct home visits to all 140 prospective scholars from the Lake and Highland Campuses; identify and cultivate parent leadership; sign SMART Family Contract.	▪SMART Congreso de Padres ▪SMART Family Contract ▪SMART Summer Scholar Study Habits
September October November December	▪HSD will attend all Parent Council Meetings; maintain attendance logs; communicate regularly with parents through a hard and digital format; create SMART interactive website; identify and cultivate parent leadership; establish academic, extracurricular, and athletic focus groups.	▪SMART and STRIVE Cultural Elements ▪SMART Scholar-Athletic Program
<b>2013</b> January February March April	▪HSD will attend all Parent Council Meetings; maintain attendance logs; communicate regularly with parents through a hard and digital format; update interactive SMART website; identify and cultivate parent leadership prior to SMART opening; create academic, extracurricular, and athletic focus groups; and prepare parent logistical support for the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Summer Colloquium;	▪SMART Seminars and Advisories ▪SMART Parent Reading List ▪SMART Summer Colloquium ▪STRIVE Summer Academy
May June July	▪HSD will hold pre-elections for Congreso de Padres representatives; prepare parent logistical support for the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Summer Colloquium; set Congreso de Padres agenda for the upcoming year; and prepare for end of SMART Summer Colloquium Honoring Ceremony; SMART Parent Orientation 1 and 2; SMART Registration.	▪SRS: STRIVE Rubric System ▪Disciplinary Referrals ▪Service Learning Projects ▪SMART Communication Protocols ▪SMART Save the Dates ▪SMART Calendar and Schedule
<b>August 10, 2013</b>	▪All SMART parent involvement will commemorate the successful completion of the SMART Summer Colloquium in addition to demonstrating gratitude through the SMART Scholar Honoring Ceremony.	▪SMART Cultural Honoring Ceremony
<b>August 12, 2013</b>	▪First day of school for all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Scholars.	▪SMART Dismissal Protocols

In addition to a home visit from a school administrator, each scholar and family is required to attend two summer orientation days, one in May and one in August, which include all registration processes and general school orientation. Once the year begins, parents receive bi-weekly communication from an advisor, a weekly behavioral report (SRS), an academic progress report every three weeks, and a number of school events: back-to-school night, two parent conference nights, three trimester awards ceremonies, and an EOY SMART Promotion Night. Parents are required to pick up student report cards in person, either by attending the conference night or visiting the school. In the 2010-2011 school year, approximately 85% of parents attended conferences.

Over the past two school years, parents from the West Denver Prep Highland and Lake Campuses have been widely vocal at a number of Northwest Denver educational forums, school-sponsored meetings, and neighborhood presentations in clear support of the West Denver Prep SMART high school design. Since the inception of our breakthrough model, Mr. Vigil, Designer and School Director of SMART

Southwest, has met with the Northwest parents twice last school year, and twice during this school year on both the Highland and Lake campuses, to share the specific design elements of our college preparatory high school framework. Mr. Gibbons, our Chief Executive Officer, has met with the Parent Councils from both the Highland and Lake Campuses twice this academic school year. On all occasions, the response has been favorable and supportive, and parents look forward to all the work involved – showing up to more meetings, signing Letters of Intent to enroll, speaking at DPS Board of Education meetings, and meeting with their DPS Board of Education representative, Arturo Jimenez, to demonstrate their resolve around the approval of a SMART Northwest campus.

We have also rolled out the SMART Cafecitos, a community-based conversation about the SMART Northwest proposal, to our parents and community stakeholders from 7:45am to 9:00am on the following dates and locations: March 19, 2012 at the Lake Campus; March 22, 2012 at El Bronquito; and April 5, 2012 at the Highland Campus. Included in this application are a number of Letters of Support that come directly from our parents, scholars, and community members, as well as other SMART Northwest stakeholders. In terms of reaching out to our teachers this school year, Mr. Vigil has conducted two network-wide professional development sessions on the SMART design open to the entire West Denver Prep network, and he has spoken directly to scholars on both the Highland and Lake campuses on three separate occasions. Additionally, he hosted an open forum to share the SMART Northwest design on March 14, 2012 for all scholars at the Lake Campus and on March 18, 2012 for all scholars at the Highland Campus. Evidence of Parent and Community-Based support is included in Appendix E.

**Parent Councils.** The most significant structural element to ensure that constituencies are properly represented is the Parent Council. By having an independent Parent Council, SMART NW can respond more specifically to the needs of parents, and they will have direct access to the School Director who is most able to address their concerns. The School Director will be very active with this group. The parent representative for the Northwest region of West Denver Prep schools provides this critical voice in the full Board meetings, and other parents will be encouraged to often attend Board meetings, which are always public in accordance with Colorado Sunshine Law.

- SMART NW will have its own Parent Council. The composition will match the expectations of C.R.S. 22-7-106:
  - Building School Director
  - One elected teacher representative
  - Two appointed community members
  - Three elected parent representatives

The Parent Council will meet monthly and will actively encourage participation beyond the elected members. The Parent Council will advise the School Director, handle concerns raised by parents, oversee parent volunteer efforts, plan special events, and support the school staff in meeting specific parent needs.

**Organizational Partners.** West Denver Prep is an independent non-profit organization, and does not have any formal ties to a charter management organization or other organization. However, the informal connections to national networks described above have certainly contributed to the success of the existing school. Further partnership with Building Excellent Schools is likely to support the professional development of our school leader as she trains for her role as the School Director of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest. Collaboration already exists with Uncommon Schools, a successful charter management organization in New York and New Jersey, where several members of the leadership team have participated in staff development training.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest values the programmatic role of community-based organizations in Northwest Denver, especially those who provide substantive opportunities for youth and community empowerment. Working in conjunction with those stakeholders, we will extend our sway to inspire and guide our scholars on campus and within our extended community. Current community partners in Northwest Denver include Padres & Jovenes Unidos, Denver Parks and Rec, the Mi Casa Resource Center, and the Colorado I Have a Dream Foundation. Many of our scholars and their parents already participate in these community-based organizations. Once our scholars enter the Graduate House, they will also have more advanced and long-term opportunities to intern and develop programming as part of the service learning projects in their junior and senior years.

At the time of this application, SMART Northwest is not relying on a community partner to provide a service that is integral to our operating of our school or educational model. Further to this point, SMART NW does not have any fee-based or in-kind community partnerships either currently or planned. However, we regularly engage local community organizations as needed to support our scholars.

#### **E. Parent Satisfaction**

As reflected in the West Denver Prep Accountability Plan, all schools' goal is at least 85% satisfaction (defined as agree or strongly agree) on those questions that speak to the clear and open communication of the school and the quality of the academic program. The Chief Operating Officer trains all school leaders in the distribution of the survey and coordinates this project for the network. At each campus, surveys are sent home with regular communication regarding the importance of parent feedback and engaging in this project. Current West Denver Prep schools have achieved 95% and above response rates in the past year.

West Denver Prep's systems for parent events, an advisory system to support all families, regular conferences, and parent council meetings, all described above, all assess parent satisfaction with the school program and provide opportunities to address concerns.

As an Accountability Plan measure, survey results are used in leadership evaluations. In the event that the positive response rate does not meet either the SPF standard or our own internal standard, the CEO and School Director will develop a plan for generating further parent engagement and addressing specific concerns in the upcoming school year.

#### **F. Discipline Policy**

**Philosophy and Intentions.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest honors the cultural notion that scholars should be both *educated* and *ser educados*. In the former instance, we refer specifically to the principle that our scholars will receive and benefit immensely from a premier college preparatory education. In the latter instance, *ser educado* is a specific cultural tradition that implies once scholars are taught right, they should act right: consistently exhibiting the STRIVE core values within every social context in an out of school. We honor the teachings our parents impart to their children, and we believe these shared core values are foundational to the success of our school culture. The STRIVE core values provide scholars with the opportunity for self-improvement, individual growth, and purposeful social agency.

The core values serve as the foundation for our rules and behavioral expectations. As a *colectivo y comunidad*, we will honor these core values by building a safe, supportive, and orderly environment. As the indigenous people of Ciapas assert – *mandar obedeciendo* – which means *we must command by obeying* and adhering to said rules and expectations. Scholar behaviors and conflict that do not reflect STRIVE values and disrupt learning or endanger the welfare of our SMART *colectivo* will receive

immediate, equitable, and purposeful consequences. All improper scholar conduct will be regarded as an opportunity to further educate our scholars through the Core Values: Scholarship, Teamwork, Respect, Intelligence, Virtue, and Effort.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest’s Core Values are designed to initiate a set of specific rules and consequences. We will handle all situations with common sense and in a manner consistent with the guidelines and policies established herein. We believe that mutual respect will foster desirable behavior, learning, and appropriate consequences. The school’s core values and resulting behavioral expectations are seamlessly lived at school, on school grounds, at school sanctioned activities or events, or while being transported by school approved vehicles, or at school functions/activities taking place off school property. Any violation of school rules during these times will invariably lead to disciplinary measures – and if warranted – notification of law enforcement authorities.

**Educational Responsibilities.** All scholars have an inherent right to a premier college preparatory education, and they also have the right to a safe, supportive, and orderly environment, which includes the right to earn and receive respect. As an educational *colectivo*, we also take into account that West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators also have a right to teach within a safe, supportive, and orderly environment, which includes the right to earn and receive respect. We will always assume the best about scholars and educators, and we will only focus on the issues at-hand. Behavior that conflicts with and interrupts the pace and direction of our educational mission will receive immediate, equitable, and purposeful consequences.

**STRIVE Rubric System (SRS).** In order to foster and internalize accountability for the behavioral element of our college preparatory culture, the STRIVE Rubric System (SRS) establishes a clear, consistent, and equitable process for meting out consequences and opportunities for scholarly and non-scholarly choices. Scholars are naturally expected to live out the STRIVE Core Values in all realms of their everyday lives, whether at school, at home, or in the community. In the simplest of terms, the STRIVE Rubric System documents both scholarly and non-scholarly choices in the form of a Log Entry (Consequence) or SMART Entry (Opportunity). More importantly, the system also establishes clear and consistent communication protocols between school staff and parents regarding STRIVE choices:

Log Entry (Consequence): Scholars who do not make STRIVE choices will earn a Log Entry for the following:

Off-Task/Talking	Disrespect	Dishonesty	SLANT
Hitting/Pushing	Throwing Objects	Disruptive/Loud	Inappropriate Language
Tardy/No Pass	Uniform Violation	Cell Phone/ Electronics	Chewing Gum/ Eating
Disorganized/ Unprepared for Class	No Parent Signature	Skipping Delta Lunch, Delta Hour, or College Prep	Unacceptable PDA

At the discretion of a school administrator, scholars can also earn a Log Entry at a school-sponsored event or activity or while being transported in a school approved vehicle.

**SMART Entry (Opportunity):** Scholars who go above and beyond the STRIVE choices will earn a SMART Entry (Opportunity) for each occasion, which will thereby entitle scholars to rewards and privileges on and off campus in the subsequent week. A SMART Entry may include a number of ways to go above and beyond STRIVE choices; therefore, West Denver Prep SMART educators and staff will assign them accordingly. At the discretion of a school administrator, scholars can also earn a SMART Entry at a school-sponsored event or activity or while being transported in a school approved vehicle.

**Delta Lunch:** Delta Lunch is earned at every 3 Log Entries. In terms of mathematics, delta represents “change in” or “difference.” In this context, scholars who need a “change in” their behavior by making a greater impact and “difference” through their STRIVE choices thereby give up their social opportunities of Alpha Lunch.

**Delta Hour:** Delta Hour is earned at every 6 Log Entries; or if a scholar earns 3 Log Entries after lunch prior to a weekend dismissal (typically Friday); or if a scholar misses a mandatory Delta Lunch, they will be required to stay for Delta Hour from 2:05 P.M. to 3:05 P.M.

**STRIVE Saturday School:** STRIVE Saturday School is earned at every 9 Log Entries, and it involves a number of intensive and purposeful intervention strategies from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. every other Saturday during each six-week interim to help scholars refocus on striving for college.

At the start of every six-week interim, each scholar will zero out all Log Entries and have another opportunity to live out the STRIVE Core Values.

Six Week Interim: Log Entry Consequences		
3 Log Entries	6 Log Entries	9 Log Entries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> <li>•Delta Hour</li> <li>•Parent Notification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> <li>•STRIVE Saturday School</li> <li>•Parent Notification</li> <li>•Mandatory Conference</li> </ul>
12 Log Entries	15 Log Entries	18 Log Entries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> <li>•Delta Hour</li> <li>•Parent Notification</li> <li>•Mandatory Conference</li> <li>•SMART Discipline Contract (Optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> <li>•Parent Notification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Delta Lunch</li> <li>•Delta Hour</li> <li>•STRIVE Saturday School</li> <li>•Suspension (Optional)</li> <li>•Mandatory Conference</li> <li>•SMART Discipline Contract</li> </ul>

As with all school data, disciplinary procedure data is reviewed monthly by the CEO with the School Director and also reported to the West Denver Prep board. Disaggregated racial data will be a component of this review, and if certain races are disproportionately represented, these trends will be analyzed and reviewed by school leadership and an action plan adopted. School Leadership and teaching staff will receive both professional development and coaching in considering these trends.

Implementation of the school’s discipline policy is the responsibility of the Dean of Students, and ultimately the responsibility of the School Director. Any suspension must be reviewed by the School Director. Any multi-day suspension also requires notification of either the CEO or the Chief Schools

Officer, and any expulsion filing requires their approval. The Office Manager is responsible for entering discipline records into Infinite Campus.

#### **G. Student Engagement**

All West Denver Prep campuses have the goal of 95% annual attendance. High rates of attendance are supported by all aspects of the student and parent engagement plan described above. In cases of poor attendance, school leadership and teachers will engage with families to support improvement, including attendance contracts as necessary. The Office Manager is responsible for collecting and monitoring attendance data, which is reviewed monthly by the School Director and CEO and reported monthly to the board.

West Denver Prep does not have an Accountability Plan goal for the student survey, but we closely monitor responses especially regarding communicating with teachers and administrators and regarding student safety. If the positive response rate does not meet the SPF standard, data will be reviewed to identify trends and discussed with the School Director and CEO. We do not plan to use student survey data in leadership evaluations.

## Section II. LEADERSHIP

### A. Leadership Team Personnel

The design team for the proposed West Denver Prep SMART Northwest, Science, Math, & Arts Academy includes members of the current school staff, a SMART Designer, and members of the Board of Trustees. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is overseen by the West Denver Prep Board of Trustees, and it will maintain its own Parent Council. Please see the Governance and Management section of this application for more information on this distinction.

The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and SMART Designer will share responsibility for supervision and oversight, and they will have regular daily involvement with the vision and implementation of its mission. Upon opening West Denver Prep SMART Northwest, the school will have a School Director, Dean of Instruction, a Dean of Students, an Office Receptionist, and eight teaching staff members.

The ideal West Denver Prep SMART leader is deeply committed to the vision of a four-year college for all students. The ideal leader is resilient and dedicated. She has demonstrated exceptional past academic results for students in the classroom and has at least several years of formal or informal experience managing adults.

Members of the school leadership team will be hired during West Denver Prep's normal hiring cycle, November – March of the year prior to opening. All West Denver Prep administrator hires are reviewed by the CEO or Chief Schools Officer. Generating redundancy is an important part of that review. Principals communicate their long-range plans with the CEO on a two-year basis and succession planning is addressed by training future principals in the Leader-in-Training cohort.

#### Key Members – Staff.

- Chris Gibbons, Chief Executive Officer. Chris will remain in the role of Chief Executive Officer for the organization, be directly involved in the implementation of all new schools, and serve as the supervisor of several Principals.
- Josh Smith, Chief Schools Officer. Josh, the successful leader of West Denver Prep's Harvey Park Campus for the past three years, will become Chief Schools Officer in July. In his first year in this role, Josh will supervise four new middle school principals for West Denver Prep, as well as coordinating our leadership professional development and leadership evaluation systems. Over time, Josh's portfolio of Principals will likely expand.
- Katie Holz-Russell, Chief Curriculum Officer, most recently served as the Principal of West Denver Prep's Federal Campus. Prior to joining the West Denver Prep Community, she served as the Education Director for Breakthrough Kent Denver and as a member of the Upper School Faculty at Kent Denver School. She is a Teach for America Alum. Throughout her seven year teaching career, she taught in public, charter, and private school environments before moving into full time administration. Ms. Holz-Russell graduated with honors from Knox College with a B.A. in English Literature and holds a Master of Education degree from Regis.
- Whitney Bride, Chief Operating Officer. Whitney will remain as the Chief Financial Officer of the West Denver Prep network. She will oversee financial compliance and operational leadership.
- Antonio Vigil, SMART Designer. Antonio possesses twelve years of professional expertise as an exemplary K-12, bilingual, and urban educator-administrator. A Denver native and first-generation college graduate, he has worked previously with Southwest Denver scholars and their families while at KIPP: Sunshine Peak Academy; and more recently, he established the high-achieving academic culture at Ricardo Flores Magon Academy. In addition to designing SMART, he serves as the Seminar Specialist



for the West Denver Prep network.

- Kate Schrepfer, SMART Northwest School Director. Kate spent the past eight years working for educational change at the school and district level with a focus on students who have not succeeded in traditional schools. She is an alumna of Teach for American and has served as the Regional Recruitment Director for their Lansing, Michigan office. She was the Professional Development Specialist for District of Columbia Public Schools and Dean of Academics at Maya Angelou Academy at New Beginnings Youth Development Facility in Maryland.
- Camille Howells, Director of Development and Communications, is responsible for network fundraising, branding, print and web collateral, public relations and visitor tours for the West Denver Prep network. Previously, she coordinated large-scale student volunteer and civic engagement programs at Colorado State University as well as grant-making and community development initiatives throughout Colorado as part of the El Pomar Foundation Fellowship program. An AmeriCorps alumna and graduate of John Brown University, she is currently pursuing a graduate degree in Public Administration from the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver.

#### **Key Members – Board.**

- Michael Barkin, KRG Capital, *Treasurer*
- Moira Cullen, The Capstone Group, *Vice-President*
- Judith Garcia, Southwest Parent Council Representative, *Board Member*
- Chris Gibbons, West Denver Prep, *ex officio*
- Shelley Gomez, University of Colorado at Boulder, *Board Member*
- Chris Henderson, U.S. Department of the Interior, *Board Member*
- Kim Knous Dolan, Donnell-Kay Foundation, *Secretary*
- Jerry Lassos, Denver Public Schools, *Board Member*
- Myles Mendoza, Education Reform Now, *Board Member*
- Alexander Ooms, ClearCreek Partners, *Board Member*
- Maria Sierra, Northwest Parent Council Representative, *Board Member*
- Keith Trammell, Hogan Lovells, *Board Member*
- Chris Watney, Colorado Children’s Campaign, *President*

Board member qualifications are detailed in the Governance section of this application.

**Collective Qualifications.** The most significant of the collective qualifications of this team is the successful founding and operations of West Denver Prep’s Network. In 2011, with a population of 91% free or reduced lunch scholars, the Denver Public Schools School Performance Framework ranked all four West Denver Prep schools as four of the top five secondary schools in the district and four of 15 schools district-wide to receive the highest rating of “Distinguished” out of 137 schools evaluated. On the 2011 Colorado Growth Model, all four schools far exceeded district and state median growth scores in all subjects.

The leadership team has both significant instructional experience and shared experience among nationally recognized programs succeeding to increase proficiency among low-income scholars of color. Whitney and Josh are alumni of the Teach for America Corps (TFA), a nationally-renowned program of educator development and training. Chris and Antonio both have administrative experience within high-performing educational programs, and both have been very active in college preparatory educational models for low-income scholars in the same neighborhood where West Denver Prep operates. In preparing to open the original campus, Chris completed the Building Excellent Schools (BES) Fellowship, a nationally-recognized program for training charter school leaders to design schools that implement best practices for low-income urban scholars. The leadership team not only has the

benefit of this extensive experience, but also established connections to BES, Breakthrough, and TFA, three national networks that allow for collaboration across schools and excellent recruiting opportunities.

The board has the obvious experience of the governance of the existing West Denver Prep charter. In addition to this experience, several board members have past experience on other charter school boards, and several more have additional non-profit and other governance experience. Board members bring skills in educational leadership, finance, facilities management, charter schools and educational reform, and high school and college placement.

All staff members at West Denver Prep are eligible for performance based raises, which include feedback on student academic growth, instructional effectiveness, and contributions to school culture. A task force comprised of board members, administrators, and teachers is currently developing this system based on best practices from other CMOs. We anticipate finalizing a system by June.

#### **B. Leadership Team Coaching and Evaluation**

West Denver Prep School Directors are supervised by the Chief Schools Officer and the Chief Executive Officer. (In 2012-2013, four principals report to the CSO and three principals report to the CEO). In both cases, supervisors visit schools for at least one day each week, observe the principals engaged in various roles of their job, and provide feedback and frequent coaching. Professional development and targeted coaching are a component of this regular support. Principals talk casually each week, and more formally every six weeks, about areas of success and challenge in their school and areas of growth in their own professional development. Professional development opportunities include school visits within and outside the West Denver Prep network, six-week principal meetings, and additional support as designated by the CSO or CEO.

Principals in the West Denver Prep network are ultimately accountable to the CEO, who reports on their evaluations to the Board. The board reviews student achievement, attendance, discipline, academic, and other school data on a monthly basis. Twice annually, the CEO completes a formal evaluation of each school leader (template attached) using each of these data sources, and in accordance with both the network accountability plan and the UIP. Upon completion, these evaluations are forwarded to the executive committee of the board.

The West Denver Prep board has evaluated the CEO, who in turn has evaluated school leadership, for the past seven years, leading the network to four distinguished schools. The board includes educators, policy makers, and business leaders who are well-versed in performance evaluation and data analysis.

Unsatisfactory leadership performance will be addressed first by a performance plan implemented by the CSO and CEO. If performance does not improve, the CEO will advise board members of the status of the performance, up to and including possible termination. Evaluation of the performance plan will include student achievement and other relevant data and additional performance management tools.

Coaching the campus leadership is the primary responsibility of the Principal. The CSO and CEO regularly check in with their Principals about the performance of their team members, support in their evaluation, and read their formal evaluations. In the event of the performance plan for a campus leadership team member, the CSO or CEO would be intimately involved.

#### **C. School Personnel Structure**

The following chart lists the proposed staffing positions added each year for the first four years of growth at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest, 2013-2017.

Y1 2013-2014	Y2 2014-2015	Y3 2015-2016	Y4 2016-2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•School Director</li> <li>•Dean of Instruction for Undergraduate House</li> <li>•Dean of Students</li> <li>•Office Manager</li> <li>•7 Full-Time Educators</li> <li>•1 Full-Time Special Education Instructor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•College Counselor 1</li> <li>•Operations Manager</li> <li>•Dean of Instruction for Graduate House</li> <li>•7 Full-Time Educators</li> <li>•.5 FTE Special Education Instructor</li> <li>•Office Receptionist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•6 Full-Time Educators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•6 Full-Time Educators</li> <li>•.5 FTE Special Education Instructor</li> <li>•College Counselor 2</li> <li>•Athletic Director</li> <li>•Registrar</li> </ul>

As stated previously in this application, West Denver Prep adopts a program of structured English immersion for all students. The purpose of this program is to achieve English proficiency for all students as quickly as possible, while holding the utmost respect for the language and culture of every student who enters the school. West Denver Prep provides professional development opportunities every six weeks and in the summer for all teachers to focus on specific needs of English Language Learners.

The Chief Executive Officer of West Denver Prep is the chief executive of the organization and is ultimately responsible for its effectiveness. He supervises some Principals and School Directors, while the Chief Schools Officer supervises others. Principals are the building leaders of each campus and are responsible for the instructional program, scholar issues, and parent relationships on that campus. An Office Manager and Office Receptionist, reporting to the School Director, are responsible for running the local office and the day-to-day data responsibilities. A Dean of Students, who reports directly to the School Director, is responsible for assisting with student discipline, student athletics, and managing daily school operations, including facilities. As noted above, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will have 7 educators in Y1, 14 educators in Y2, 20 educators in Y3, and 26 educators in Y4. This provides for a scholar-educator ratio of between 16-17:1. When all adults in the building are considered, the ratio is between 12-13:1.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest’s salary range, employment benefits, and incentive/reward structures are referenced in the following section as well as in the attached Employee Manual. We do not anticipate outsourcing any primary functions to third parties or consultants.

**D. Employment Policies**

West Denver Prep will remain an at-will employer, and a single organization will manage the employment of all campuses. Appendix K, the West Denver Prep Employee Handbook is attached to this application.

Entering salaries for educators at West Denver Prep are ultimately at the discretion of the CEO and the board, but generally follow a tiered structure, with one level for educators without formal teaching experience, a second level for educators with 1-5 years of experience, and a third level for those with more than six years of experience. In 2013, we anticipate these levels ranging from \$40,000-\$47,000, with future changes dependent on public funding levels. This practice reflects the school’s insistence of rewarding effectiveness, not experience, and seeking to attract the very most talented young educators and compensate them at a level that will compete with any other opportunities. Exceptions for specific

experience are made at the discretion of the CEO and approval of the Board.

All staff members at West Denver Prep are eligible for a performance-based raise. The Board of Trustees annually approves a cost-of-living raise based on Denver's CPI and educators are eligible for up to 2 additional percentage points at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer and School Director and based upon formal evaluations.

#### **E. Operations – Student Recruitment & Enrollment**

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will begin recruitment at the Lake and Highland Campuses in late November, 2012, offering both English and Spanish informational meetings. In the first two weeks of December 2012, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will host two identical informational meetings at the Lake and Highland Campuses. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will continue the practice of using home visits as its primary strategy for scholar recruitment. The home visit ensures that families receive a personal contact from a school member regardless of the family's participation in current school or community events. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators, staff, and volunteers conduct the home visit campaign on Saturdays in January and February. All families receive the information regardless of special education status or past academic performance.

**Enrollment Policy.** Northwest SMART will fully participate in the Denver Public Schools School Choice Process. The School will preference graduates on West Denver Prep's North Denver middle school campuses, Lake and Highland, as well as siblings of students already enrolled in WDP SMART Northwest (in future years). The school will maintain a waiting list if permitted under applicable School Choice procedures. A school administrator will visit the home of every admitted student in April, May, or June to go over key school policies, review the student handbook, and read and sign the Northwest SMART Family Contract. The school's goal for annual re-enrollment is at least 85%, a measure nearly every West Denver Prep campus has met in every year.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest families also participate in two summer orientation sessions. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest replaces scholars from the waiting list as space is available in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade class. Scholars who withdrew and then wish to re-enroll are placed at the bottom of the current waiting list for that year.

If West Denver Prep SMART Northwest opened tomorrow morning, 95.5% of our prospective freshmen at the Highland and Lake campuses would show up on time, in uniform, living out our STRIVE Core Values, and ready to leave this world smarter than they found it to and through graduation from college. Across both campuses, 73% of our 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 75% of our 7<sup>th</sup> graders have signed the "Intent to Enroll Form".

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest student enrollment will be as follows:

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>
<b>9</b>	140	140	140	140	140
<b>10</b>		126	126	126	126
<b>11</b>			120	120	120
<b>12</b>				114	114
<b>Total # students</b>	140	266	386	500	500

For the past six years, West Denver Prep has conducted an extensive door-to-door campaign where educators, administrators, and volunteers visit the homes of all 8<sup>th</sup> grade scholars in a targeted

geographic area. We will obviously modify this practice for our West Denver Prep Lake and Highland graduates; that is, the School Director will individually visit all 140 prospective scholars between now and the spring of 2013. In doing so, our school will continue to be a neighborhood school serving a local population, and thereby allowing parents from all backgrounds, which may or may not have the opportunity to attend community meetings, to learn about the school in an equitable manner. In addition to this campaign, the school will publicize these plans through other West Denver Prep events, activities, and Parent Council meetings.

West Denver Prep will coordinate closely with our middle school programs to ensure smooth transitions for students with IEPs, and will actively build relationships with any other feeder middle schools for the same purpose. Costs associated with students with mild, moderate, and severe needs are allocated in the school's budget according to DPS policy. Currently, the school supports mild/moderate needs students at approximately the ratio of 1 full-time special educator for every 12 mild/moderate students, or 2.5 FTE for approximately 30 students at full build-out. The school looks forward to working with the district to support students with severe needs if desired with appropriate funding allocation to the school.

#### **F. Operations - Transportation**

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest does not intend to provide transportation. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest intends for its campuses to be a neighborhood school serving primarily those scholars who live in close geographic proximity to the campus. We will contract with DPS or other vendors for transportation needs for field trips, athletic events, and special events.

The school will provide discounted RTD passes for students who request additional assistance to ensure that their economic situation does not prevent their attendance at school.

#### **G. Operations - Safety and Security**

The particular nature of safety and security will depend in part on whether or not the new campuses are located in a Denver Public Schools facility. If the school is located in a DPS facility, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will comply with DPS guidelines to the extent reasonable with the academic program.

The particular nature of safety and security will depend in part on whether or not the new campuses are located in a Denver Public Schools facility. If the school is located in a DPS facility, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will comply with DPS guidelines to the extent reasonable with the academic program.

In either facility scenario, the School Leader and support staff will work with Mike Mayo in DPS Risk Management to develop a facility safety plan to address any areas of concern. The Office Manager will develop the safety and security plan in year 1 with support from the School Director. In subsequent years, the Operations Manager will be responsible for this plan.

#### **H. Operations - Insurance Coverage**

The current West Denver Prep campuses have worked with Moody Insurance Agency, the local broker, since 2005. New campuses will obtain Directors and Officers coverage in the start-up year and will add the following policies as appropriate before the first year of operations at the new school: Worker's Compensation, Package Policy (business auto, commercial property, and general liability), Teacher's Protection Plus (specific educators general liability protection), and Umbrella (extension of liability for \$1M). A copy of the current West Denver Prep network insurance summary is attached as Appendix N. The cost of liability insurance will be included in the school's CMO fees to our Network Office and are estimated at \$7,632 for the high school liability based on 2012-13 rates.

## Section III: EDUCATION PROGRAM

### A. Curriculum

**Model & Focus.** Through a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest prepares scholars in grades nine through twelve for purposeful social agency to and through graduation from four-year colleges and universities. To this end, the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest curricular model is a 21<sup>st</sup> century liberal arts and college preparatory framework that intentionally focuses on unifying its content areas through thematic-based planning and instruction. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest pinpoints authentic themes for each grade level to intentionally build connectedness and fluency from one content area to the next, most notably between science and math and among the humanities. For example, our first-year scholars will benefit from the intentional standards-based curricular planning between Conceptual Physics and the Visual Arts, whereby a culminating rocket ship design to test Newton’s Laws of Motion is shared out between both content areas. Conceptual Physics will build knowledge around these laws and their corresponding concepts (and misconceptions), and the Visual Arts will build design protocols for producing an exemplary artifact (rocket ship) to test hypotheses around said laws. To ensure that our curricular framework is impactful, our instructional methodology strategically leverages Direct Instruction with Inquiry-Based Learning, whereby our scholars benefit from cognitively appropriate opportunities to construct knowledge in whole, small, and flexible group settings. Scholars will have diverse and strategic opportunities to build and demonstrate knowledge given the deep context for linking and organizing content material (Hart, 2002).

#### Education Program Goal

The explicit goal of the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educational program is to ensure that all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars gain unconditional admission into and graduate from four-year colleges and universities without the need of remediation.

#### The Learning Environment.

Design Element	Description	Research-Based
The Learning Environment	<p><b><u>Undergraduate House</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classroom, seminar, and service learning; SMART Board technology in all classrooms; pods of 4 scholars at each table; flexible ELL groupings to accelerate cognitive academic language proficiency; intentional use of mobile laptop lab; visual arts lab; physics and biology labs with separate instructional and experimental spaces; 7 classes X 55 minutes</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Graduate House</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classroom, seminar, service, and career learning; SMART Board technology; Harkness Method (Socratic Seminar) with 18-20 scholars seated around one table; flexible ELL groupings to accelerate cognitive academic language proficiency; intentional use of mobile laptop lab; digital arts lab; chemistry, physics and engineering labs with separate instructional and experimental spaces; 4 classes X 105 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>English Language Acquisition:</i> (Cummins, 1982)</li> <li>▪ <i>Technology and Instruction:</i> (Sweet, Rasher, Abromitis, &amp; Johnson, 2004)</li> <li><i>STEM Coursework:</i> Academic Competitiveness Council/U.S. Department of</li> </ul>

		Education, 2007)
Class Size and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪Build out the school one grade at a time</li> <li>▪140 incoming freshman scholars for each academic year</li> <li>▪5 cohorts X 28 scholars</li> <li>▪Undergraduate House is comprised solely of freshman/sophomore scholars</li> <li>▪Graduate House is comprised solely of junior/senior scholars</li> </ul>	<i>Learning Environment:</i> (Billing, Jaime, Abrams, Fitzpatrick, & Kendrick, 2005)
Overview of the Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪Intensive single-track college preparatory curriculum</li> <li>▪Challenging and relevant liberal arts educational program</li> <li>▪Service Learning Projects from freshman to senior year</li> <li>▪SMART Seminar modifies the Great Books approach to instill the STRIVE Core Values and intellectual habits necessary for success to and through college</li> <li>▪Thematic-Based Curricular Planning</li> </ul>	<i>Standards-Based Academic Rigor:</i> (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollack, 2003)  <i>Human Brain and Human Learning</i> (Hart, 2002)
Selective Study of Exemplary College Preparatory High School Models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪West Denver Prep SMART Northwest has learned immensely from the educational design of charter high schools with identical and similar scholar populations whose scholars year after year achieve unconditional college readiness:</li> <li>▪Lennox Math, Science, &amp; Technology Academy (Lennox, California)</li> <li>▪Hawthorne Math and Science Academy (Hawthorne, California)</li> <li>▪Ánimo Leadership Charter School (Inglewood, California)</li> <li>▪The Preuss School (San Diego, California)</li> <li>▪YES Prep Southeast (Houston, Texas)</li> <li>▪IDEA Donna College Prep (Donna, Texas)</li> <li>▪Denver School of Science and Technology (Denver, Colorado)</li> </ul>	Detailed empirical observations and residency within rigorous standards-based college preparatory high schools

**Instructional Methodology.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars benefit from the intentional use of research-based instructional methodologies to promote understanding and critical thinking skills for content subject areas. First and foremost, our challenging and relevant liberal arts educational program is informed and completely aligns with the nine research-based instructional strategies for increasing scholar achievement (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators apply the principles of differentiated instruction, scaffolded academic instruction for English Language Learners, and engage in examination of instructional practices and their impact on scholar learning through lesson study in each discipline (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999). Based further on incremental intelligence theory, we also support a gradual release of responsibility for our scholars, providing extrinsic structure, support, and accountability for scholars in Undergraduate House; whereas, scholars in Graduate House build greater intrinsic accountability and purpose. To support exemplary instruction, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest utilizes the following instructional systems, protocols, and procedures to maximize academic achievement and focus:

- West Denver Prep SMART Northwest organizes and scaffolds information in each classroom through the Universal Blackboard System (UBS).

- West Denver Prep SMART Northwest expects scholars to begin work immediately upon entry to the classroom. By providing consistent and structured expectations for all classes, we increase time on task and general classroom focus.
- During the SMART Summer Colloquium, our incoming freshman orientation, all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will demonstrate mastery of summarizing and note-taking through the Interactive Notebook and Cornell Note-Taking Systems, and they will further understand the necessity for tracking information in an organized and hierarchical manner (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). More importantly, scholars will be held accountable daily for this type of informational tracking system within each course, and these Interactive Notebooks are qualitatively monitored twice a week in their SMART Advisories.
- Classroom culture is first and foremost tethered to exemplary instruction and the educator-scholar relationship: a focus on lesson content and context, pacing, sequencing, differentiating, and meaningful modeling and transparent accountability. As such, educators use common and age-appropriate classroom management procedures: a common language for redirection, visual and oral cueing systems, and evaluating scholar behavior through the STRIVE Rubric System (SRS).
- Challenging and relevant homework ensures skill extension and content mastery. Due to the established relationship between academic success in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and graduation rates from high school and college, our scholars will benefit from a mandatory after school “College Prep” to complete all incomplete assignments. After 9<sup>th</sup> grade, scholars must still complete all homework assignments; however, they will have until the end of the week to voluntarily complete all outstanding homework assignments (Balfanz & Legters, 2006; Jerald, 2006). Undergraduate House scholars will average 1-2 hours of homework per night, and Graduate House scholars will average 2-4 hours of homework per night.

To this end, Undergraduate House educators build and sequence lessons with a common approach to ensure content mastery and extension of skills and concepts:

Sequence of Events (SOE)	Time	Branding	Purpose	College Prep Factor (CPF)
<b>Focus &amp; Fire-Up</b>	5 minutes	“Do Now”	Scholars internalize the process for immediate focus and attention to the academic learning at-hand.	Through this process of internalizing immediate focus and attention, scholars develop automaticity for more complex and inquiry-based problem solving.
<b>Context &amp; Cultural Relevance</b>	5 minutes	“The Thread”	Educators inculcate the value and purpose for the acquisition of the new content skill or mastery of understanding for a new concept.	Scholars internalize the inherent and specific value of knowledge production within their preparation for both college and life.
<b>Rigor &amp; Challenge</b>	12 Minutes	“I Do”	Educators strategically and with clear urgency unpack ‘the essential understandings’ for the given lesson including an address of possible	Scholars internalize the value for adhering to cueing and note-taking systems for the lecture format.



			misunderstandings.	
<b>Understanding &amp; Clarifying</b>	12 minutes	“We Do”	Educators informally assess levels of understanding, clarify misunderstandings, and stretch the learning wherever possible and appropriate.	Scholars work in this intentionally scaffolded manner to stabilize and stretch their understanding of the DLO and its overarching relevance.
<b>Collaborate &amp; Construct</b>	8 minutes (Independent) 6 minutes (Collaborative)	“Build” & “Build Collaboratively”	Scholars work independently and collaboratively to build knowledge and extend learning within structured problem-solving and inquiry-based tasks which are aligned with the DLO.	Scholars understand the necessity and purpose for balancing Direct Instruction with Constructivist-Based knowledge production, and they can easily demonstrate a seamless transition from one to the other.
<b>Assess &amp; Plan</b>	7 minutes	“SMART Check”	Scholars make sense of ‘the essential understanding’ for the lesson and demonstrate mastery of the DLO.	Scholars benefit from and internalize the learning processes associated with Direct Instruction and Collaborative-Based knowledge production.

Graduate House scholars still benefit from direct and collaborative-based instruction; however, they transition into “Teaching Around Tables—The Harkness Method.” Introduced in the 1930’s at Philips Exeter Academy by a generous gift from Edward S. Harkness, this pedagogy fully activates and dignifies the internalization of prior and developing knowledge. Aligned with our challenging and liberal arts educational program, the Harkness Method of teaching is designed to foster high levels of scholarly engagement and responsibility. In a typical Harkness educational setting, there are no elongated lectures; rather, there are educator-led and modeled protocols for ensuring and measuring substantive participation. The table is an oval wooden table that seats up to twenty scholars. To this end, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest leverages direct instruction with inquiry-based learning to foster independent and critical thinking along the gradual release of responsibility learning continuum. Methodology differs from subject to subject, however, the guiding principle is that scholars prepare thoroughly, participate daily, solve problems collaboratively, and consistently lead class discussions. An ongoing respect for a diversity of perspectives is cultivated and foundational towards the success of this method.

**Instructional Materials & Scope and Sequence.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest’s academic program includes Science, Mathematics, English Language Arts, Social Sciences, Spanish, and the Visual Arts as core curricula for both the Undergraduate and Graduate House. To supplement and diversify our challenging and relevant liberal arts program, we offer elective classes, such as film studies and cinematography, urban studies, health and wellness, ethnic studies, and creative writing. West Denver

Prep SMART Northwest has developed core content and skill standards for all core subjects based on the Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards, ACT College Readiness Standards, and the College Board Standards for College Success (CBSCS). These standards serve as the foundation of our academic program, and they further define curricular content development.

<b>Science</b>			
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be able to demonstrate scientific knowledge and analytical skills that enable them to use 21 <sup>st</sup> century scientific thinking and discourse in a responsible and ethical manner. Scholars will learn to think and write as scientists; and in doing so, they will understand key concepts and develop awareness of the interrelationship among mathematics and technology. Additionally, scholars will learn to critically evaluate the benefits and limitations of science in society (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1990).			
Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<b>Conceptual Physics</b> ■ <i>Conceptual Physics</i> Prentice Hall	<b>AP Biology</b> ■ <i>Biology</i> Holt McDougal	<b>Chemistry</b> ■ <i>Chemistry, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition</i> University of Illinois	<b>AP Physics B</b> ■ <i>Physics</i> Prentice Hall or <b>AP Chemistry</b> ■ <i>Chemistry, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.</i> Zumdahl or <b>AP Environmental Science</b> ■ <i>Living in the Environment: Principles, Connections, and Solutions</i> Brooks & Cole
		Project Lead the Way Engineering <b>Principles of Engineering (POE)</b>	Project Lead the Way Engineering <b>Digital Electronics (DE)</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>			
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be able to engage in mathematical activities of analysis, synthesis, deduction, and prediction, and they will be able to drill down further to refine their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Scholars will gain deep insight into the way in which mathematics holds sway in our everyday lives as a universal language for communicating simple and complex ideas and concepts.			
Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<b>Algebra 1</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 1</i> or <b>Geometry</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 2</i>	<b>Geometry</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 2</i> or <b>Algebra II/Trigonometry</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 3</i>	<b>Algebra II/Trigonometry</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 3</i> or <b>Math Analysis</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 4</i>	<b>AP Calculus AB</b> ■ <i>College Prep Mathematics: Math 5</i> or <b>AP Statistics</b> ■ <i>Stats Modeling the World</i> Prentice Hall School Division
<b>English Language Arts</b>			
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be to meet the national standards for language arts achievement as promoted by the Council of Teachers of English, the College Board Standards for College Success for Advanced Placement Literature and Composition examinations. Scholars will exhibit confidence as they read, analyze, and respond to challenging and relevant literary texts representative			

of diverse cultures. Scholars will master all six college preparatory writing genres.			
<b>Freshman</b>	<b>Sophomore</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>
<b>World Literature</b> ▪ <i>Norton Anthology of World Literature</i> and <b>Freshman Composition</b> ▪ <i>English Composition and Grammar: Complete Course</i> Harcourt Brace	<b>Literature of the Americas</b> ▪ <i>Modernist Novel, Poetry, and Essay Study</i> and <b>Sophomore Composition</b> ▪ <i>Models for Writers St. Martin's and A Writer's Reference St. Martin's</i>	<b>British Literature</b> ▪ <i>McDougal Littell Literature – British Literature</i>	<b>AP English Literature</b> ▪ <i>Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing: AP Edition</i>
<b>Social Sciences</b>			
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be able to develop an insightful understanding of their relationship to the past, an appreciation for the global citizenry and cultures of the present, and an awareness of how their purposeful social agency will produce the next epoch of history. Further to this point, scholars will possess a clear understanding of globalization, immigration, citizenship, and nationality issues and their critical intersections.			
<b>Freshman</b>	<b>Sophomore</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Senior</b>
<b>AP Human Geography</b> ▪ <i>The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography, Eighth Edition</i> Pearson	<b>History of the Americas</b> ▪ <i>History of the Americas</i> Oxford	<b>Western Civilization/Civics</b> Western Civilization (1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trimester) ▪ <i>A History of Western Society</i> St. Martin's & Civics (3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester) ▪ <i>DPS Curriculum</i> Unit 1: Constitution and Rule of Law (3 weeks) Unit 2: Citizenship (3 weeks) Unit 3: Foreign Policy (3 weeks) ▪ Unit 4: Civic Engagement (3 weeks)	<b>AP U.S. History</b> ▪ <i>The American Pageant</i> Harcourt
<b>Spanish</b>			
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be able to develop language skills that are useful in themselves and that can be applied in various contexts and disciplines. Scholars will have the ability to eventually understand formal and informal Spanish, read periodicals and modern literary texts in Spanish, compose expository writing, and express ideas orally with accuracy and fluency.			
<b>Freshman</b>	<b>Sophomore</b>	<b>Junior</b>	
<b>Spanish I</b> ▪ <i>Avancemos! Level 1</i> Harcourt	<b>Spanish II</b> ▪ <i>Avancemos! Level 2</i> Harcourt or <b>AP Spanish Language (Native Speakers)</b> ▪ <i>Triángulo: A Propósito, Manual para estudiante, Cuarta edición</i>	<b>AP Spanish Language (Non-Native Speakers)</b> ▪ <i>Triángulo: A Propósito, Manual para estudiante, Cuarta edición</i> Wayside or <b>AP Spanish Literature (Native Speakers)</b> ▪ <i>Abriendo puertas</i> McDougal Littell	

Wayside		
The Visual Arts		
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will be able to identify and produce exemplary artifacts to communicate the expressive power of human expression and creativity. Scholars will also develop an awareness of the artistic heritage as a means of promoting and maintaining humanist ideals, and they will produce a body of work that exhibits high levels of creativity, innovation, and technical skill.		
Freshman	Sophomore	Junior
Visual Art ▪ <i>Artforms: An Introduction to the Visual Arts</i> Prentice Hall	Applied Art History of Mexico ▪ <i>Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980</i> Yale University Press	Digital Art ▪ <i>Digital Art</i> Thames and Hudson

**Standards.** Academic achievement and growth linked to critical thinking within *core academic subjects* is the primary means by which we meet our educational program goal. Due to our intensive single-track college preparatory curriculum, all scholars benefit from urgent pacing and time on task instruction in the Undergraduate House (7 classes X 55 minutes), while Graduate House (4 classes X 105 minutes) leverages direct instruction with the inquiry-based setting of the Harkness Method (Socratic Seminar). Additionally, all scholars follow our mandatory Advanced Placement Course Sequence:

Year	Advanced Placement Course Sequence
FR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Human Geography</li> </ul>
SO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Biology</li> <li>▪ Spanish Language (Native Speakers)</li> </ul>
JR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish Literature (Native Speakers)</li> <li>▪ Spanish Language (Non-Native Speakers)</li> </ul>
SR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physics B or Chemistry or Environmental Science</li> <li>▪ U.S. History</li> <li>▪ English Literature</li> <li>▪ Calculus AB/BC or Statistics</li> </ul>

All West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars benefit from our challenging and relevant liberal arts curriculum that extends foundational core academic knowledge and skills into higher order and critical thinking ones.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest subscribes to the use of the Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards, grade level expectations, and assessment frameworks. Depth of Knowledge (DOK) performance indicators additionally standardize the level at which our scholars must learn and apply the thinking processes and skills to successfully demonstrate a particular evidence outcome.<sup>4</sup> From these DOK indicators, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators refine specific internal standards that further approximate what our scholars should know and be able to do based on the expectations of the district, state, and national standards organizations. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators and administrators use a detailed item-analysis process of assessments, including but not limited to released TCAP, Advanced Placement, and ACT test items to identify precise skills and content that scholars need for academic success to and through college.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Online\\_Standards.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/Online_Standards.html)

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest standards are thereby created by aligning these skills and content with the Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards in conjunction with the DOK performance indicators. From these rigorous standards, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators plan highly structured and logically sequenced content lectures and learning activities; and moreover, they plan how they will assess mastery of each standard. Using these assessment questions, educators create comprehensive interim assessments (IAs) for each six-week period and end-of-course (EOC) comprehensive assessments for every class, all before the start of school. In addition to aligning these assessments to the Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards, we will also align our Advanced Placement courses to the College Board Standards for College Success (CBSCS).

As a DPS high school, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest adheres closely to the standards of DPS – which are aligned to the Colorado State Standards – and ensures that all scholars receive a masterful education in the content of these standards. Where necessary for college preparation, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest curricula exceed these standards in a manner that is age-appropriate and simultaneously ensures the extension of basic skills. Prior to the start of school, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators complete a Curriculum Alignment Template (CAT) for each course that establishes specific, measurable, and achievable standards-based outcomes and the assessments that will measure scholar progress towards them. These curriculum maps further outline prominent themes and essential understandings for standards-based content knowledge and skills that scholars are expected to master. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators produce unit plans that detail specific academic outcomes for each six-week unit. Thereafter, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators produce weekly lesson plans that identify specific, measurable, and achievable daily learning objectives (DLOs) that are linked to the interim assessments (IAs).

At the conclusion of every six-week section of the schedule, educators administer the comprehensive interim assessment (IA) on the material covered over the past term. Results are tabulated in Data Director™, and every educator receives direct feedback on how many scholars met the standards with respect to each standards-based question on the assessment. This feedback directly supports both scholar services and staff evaluation. Any scholar in Undergraduate House who receives  $\leq 69\%$  on this test (or  $\leq 69\%$  as a class grade) enters STRIVE Saturday Academy offered every other Saturday (9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.) for the next six weeks to receive small-group intensive sessions for the subjects of greatest need. Any scholar in Graduate House who receives  $\leq 69\%$  on this test (or  $\leq 69\%$  as a class grade) will either enter STRIVE Saturday Academy offered every other Saturday (9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.) for the next six weeks or receive individualized after school tutoring sessions in STRIVE Study Hall for the next six weeks. A combination of these two intervention strategies will also be considered based upon demonstrated need.

Further, educators receive specific feedback and support from their School Director and Dean of Instruction with respect to supporting the scholars who are not meeting standards and supporting the subject areas where scholars demonstrated the greatest deficiency. To nurture purposeful intellectual growth and social agency, our scholars will also track and respond to their learning results in a similar manner through individualized personal education plans. To support and guide this process, our scholars also work with year-long advisors, a process which is directly monitored by the Dean of Instruction and School Director, to ensure they are meeting, if not surpassing all content area standards. This process, used since the inception of West Denver Prep, has demonstrated excellent results. On the 2009-2010 Colorado Growth Model, a measure of student progress on the Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) tests, scholars at West Denver Prep's two middle schools ranked first and second in academic growth among all Colorado middle schools. The flagship Federal Campus, which had ranked first in academic growth for the past three consecutive years, posted median growth percentiles

of 91.5 in Math, 85 in Writing, and 76 in Reading. This year, it was surpassed only by West Denver Prep’s Harvey Park Campus, the first replication of the model, which posted median growth percentiles of 95 in Math, 89 in Writing, and 83 in Reading.

**Cultural Relevance.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will make the revolutionary commonplace by its intentional design to produce a clear and meaningful nexus between the scholarly traditions of Western culture and those of the Americas. In fact, we believe these inseparable traditions already reside in the everyday lives of our scholars. By rendering these traditions obvious and intelligible, we purposefully remind our scholars about the academic trajectory they have been on for centuries. In fact, every SMART design element of the school, from the curriculum to the instructional methodologies to our collaborative leadership model, is premised firmly on this notion. If we expect our scholars to leave this world smarter than they found it, they must first understand the wider context for making these choices in the first place. As our scholars become academically smarter, they become more critically conscious and they will act purposefully to transition from a challenging and relevant West Denver Prep SMART Northwest education to its four-year college equivalent.

**B. School Schedule & Calendar**

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest operates on a common calendar, based on the principle that if used well, more instructional time will result in greater scholar achievement. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest’s schedule allows for approximately 25% more instructional time than traditional DPS high schools.

The proposed school calendar for 2013-2014 and daily schedule are included in Appendix M. One key feature of this calendar is 181 total instructional days (11 more than traditional DPS high schools). These additional days are achieved by starting one full week earlier and incorporating professional development into the school day (one-hour session every other week) rather than taking student contact days for this purpose.

- A longer school day with instruction beginning at 8:00 A.M. and continuing until 4:05 P.M. Scholars are dismissed at 2:05 P.M. on Friday. Scholars who do not complete daily homework assignments remain at school for College Prep (homework center) until 5:05 P.M. on weekdays.
- Daily and weekly characteristics of this calendar include:

Daily Academic Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ M-TH: 8:00 A.M. to 4:05 P.M.</li> <li>○ F: 8:00 A.M. to 2:05 P.M.</li> </ul>
West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Clubs, Intramurals, and Competitive Team Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ M-TH: 4:05 P.M. to 6:05 P.M.</li> <li>○ F: 2:05 P.M. to 4:05 P.M.</li> </ul>
Morning Meeting	Community Meeting Every Morning: 8:00 A.M. to 8:15 A.M.
Community Meeting	All School Community Meeting Every Friday: 55 Minutes
Undergraduate House [9/10]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SMART Periods: 7 X 55 Minutes</li> <li>○ SMART Advisory: Monday and Wednesday</li> <li>○ SMART Seminar: Tuesday and Thursday</li> </ul>
Graduate House [11/12]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SMART Collegiate Schedule:</li> <li>○ M/W Periods: 4 X 105 Minutes</li> <li>○ T/TH Periods: 4 X 105 Minutes</li> </ul>

**Division of Instructional Time**

<b>Course</b>	<b>Undergraduate House Time Per Week</b>	<b>Graduate House Time Per Week</b>
Literature	4.5 hours per week	
Composition	4.5 hours per week	
English		6.5 hours per week
Social Sciences	4.25 hours per week	4.5 hours per week
Mathematics	5.0 hours per week	6.5 hours per week
Science	5.0 hours per week	6.5 hours per week
Spanish	4.25 hours per week	4.5 hours per week
Visual Art	4.25 hours per week	4.5 hours per week

### **C. Progress Monitoring and Assessment**

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators develop and revise standards during our summer training program based upon DPS benchmarks, Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards, College Board Standards for College Success (CBSCS), and their own item analysis of test items on which our scholars will need to demonstrate success. At the very minimum, it is expected that every graduating scholar will be proficient in written and spoken expression, English and foreign language, mathematical reasoning and problem-solving, and understanding scientific procedures and results. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest graduates will possess a broad appreciation and knowledge of diverse cultures that make up Western and non-Western societies. More importantly, our graduates will benefit from a seamless and purposeful integration of the visual arts as a primary craft and supplement to foundational content area curriculum and instruction.

In addition to the outcomes described above, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will demonstrate that its educational program is consistent with maximizing learning opportunities for all scholars, with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for scholars who are identified as at-risk, with special needs, and as English Language Learners. To this end, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will supplement its academic program on an identified needs-basis. For example, STRIVE Saturday Academy will provide high-dosage tutoring for scholars who are in jeopardy of falling below grade level; the SMART Advisory will provide additional instructional support for courses in which scholars have difficulties; and the STRIVE Summer Academy will provide additional instructional support for scholars challenged by difficult material.

### **Performance Management – Annual Achievement Goals and Objectives.**

<b><i>DPS School Performance Framework and College Preparedness Indicators</i></b>	<b><i>West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Annual Achievement Goals and Measures: Academic Performance Success, Goals, and College Preparedness</i></b>
Absolute Performance 1 [AP 1] Colorado Student Assessment Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●75% of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars who have attended the school for one full academic school year will score in the Proficient or Advanced category on the TCAP Reading, Writing, and Mathematics test in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.</li> <li>●80% of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars who have attended the school for two academic school years will score in the Proficient or Advanced category on the TCAP Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science test in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.</li> </ul>

(TCAP)																																					
Absolute Performance 2 [AP 2] ACT	<p>•West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will meet or surpass the following ‘on-target’ scores for college readiness as measured by the ACT assessment program in grades 9-12.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>ACT ASSESSMENT</th> <th>GRADE LEVEL</th> <th>SMART SCHOLARS</th> <th>COMPOSITE SCORE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ACT EXPLORE</td> <td>9<sup>th</sup> Grade</td> <td>≥ 75%</td> <td>≥ 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACT PLAN</td> <td>10<sup>th</sup> Grade</td> <td>≥ 80%</td> <td>≥ 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACT</td> <td>11<sup>th</sup> Grade</td> <td>≥ 85%</td> <td>≥ 23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACT</td> <td>12<sup>th</sup> Grade</td> <td>≥ 90%</td> <td>≥ 25</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	ACT ASSESSMENT	GRADE LEVEL	SMART SCHOLARS	COMPOSITE SCORE	ACT EXPLORE	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	≥ 75%	≥ 16	ACT PLAN	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	≥ 80%	≥ 20	ACT	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	≥ 85%	≥ 23	ACT	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	≥ 90%	≥ 25																
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Absolute Performance 4 [AP 4] West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Earned Credits	<p>•West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will ensure our scholars are on-track in earning academic credits for graduation from high school and unconditional entrance into a four-year college or university. Based upon our student academic performance data from the past three years, we know that at least 10% of our first and subsequent cohorts will not reach our rigorous thresholds for college preparedness in Y1. Through focused and intensive academic intervention, we know that by Y5, all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will achieve unconditional college readiness for acceptance into and graduation from a four-year college and university.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Y5</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012-2013</td> <td>2013-2014</td> <td>2014-2015</td> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>2016-2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>90%</td> <td>93%</td> <td>95%</td> <td>97%</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	90%	93%	95%	97%	100%																					
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Absolute Performance 5 [AP 5] West Denver Prep SMART Attendance	<p>•West Denver Prep will average 95% daily student attendance each school year.</p>																																				



<p>Absolute Performance 6 [AP 6] West Denver Prep SMART 100% College Acceptance</p>	<p>•100% of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Scholars will gain acceptance to a minimum of two Colorado public four-year colleges or universities.</p>																		
<p>Growth Index 1 TCAP [GI 1]</p>	<p>•At least two-thirds of all scholars scoring Unsatisfactory or Partially Proficient on the TCAP test in the previous year will increase at least one category in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Median growth percentile will exceed 65 in each subject area.</p>																		
<p>Growth Index 2 NCLB AYP [GI 2]</p>	<p>•Each sub-group of scholars will make Adequate Yearly Progress in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation.</p>																		
<p>Growth Index 3 [GI 3] NWEA Measures of Academic Progress</p>	<p>•The following chart illustrates the target growth of RIT scores grades 9-11. RIT scores have an established correlation with TCAP proficiency and advanced levels; moreover, TCAP proficient and advanced levels also have an established correlation with ACT scores and overall college preparedness:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="480 1010 1406 1677"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="480 1010 613 1098">Grade Level</th> <th data-bbox="613 1010 987 1098">Reading RIT Score</th> <th data-bbox="987 1010 1406 1098">Mathematics RIT Score</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="480 1098 613 1241">9/EOG</td> <td data-bbox="613 1098 987 1241">80% @ <math>\geq</math> 220/TCAP/Proficient 20% @ <math>\geq</math> 201/TCAP/PP</td> <td data-bbox="987 1098 1406 1241">80% @ <math>\geq</math> 246/TCAP/Proficient 20% @ <math>\geq</math> 230/TCAP/PP</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="480 1241 613 1383">10/EOG</td> <td data-bbox="613 1241 987 1383">90% @ <math>\geq</math> 223/TCAP/Proficient 10% @ <math>\geq</math> 205/TCAP/PP</td> <td data-bbox="987 1241 1406 1383">90% @ <math>\geq</math> 251/TCAP/Proficient 10% @ <math>\geq</math> 234/TCAP/PP</td> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="480 1383 613 1472">Grade Level</th> <th data-bbox="613 1383 987 1472">Language RIT Score</th> <th data-bbox="987 1383 1406 1472">Science RIT Score</th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="480 1472 613 1572">9/EOG</td> <td data-bbox="613 1472 987 1572">80% @ <math>\geq</math> 221 20% @ <math>\geq</math> 210</td> <td data-bbox="987 1472 1406 1572">80% @ <math>\geq</math> 221 20% @ <math>\geq</math> 210</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="480 1572 613 1677">10/EOG</td> <td data-bbox="613 1572 987 1677">90% @ <math>\geq</math> 231 10% @ <math>\geq</math> 220</td> <td data-bbox="987 1572 1406 1677">90% @ <math>\geq</math> 231 10% @ <math>\geq</math> 220</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>•The average percentile increase on the NWEA MAP assessments in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics among Latino scholars at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will equal or exceed the average RIT score percentile increase of all scholars in the school.</p>	Grade Level	Reading RIT Score	Mathematics RIT Score	9/EOG	80% @ $\geq$ 220/TCAP/Proficient 20% @ $\geq$ 201/TCAP/PP	80% @ $\geq$ 246/TCAP/Proficient 20% @ $\geq$ 230/TCAP/PP	10/EOG	90% @ $\geq$ 223/TCAP/Proficient 10% @ $\geq$ 205/TCAP/PP	90% @ $\geq$ 251/TCAP/Proficient 10% @ $\geq$ 234/TCAP/PP	Grade Level	Language RIT Score	Science RIT Score	9/EOG	80% @ $\geq$ 221 20% @ $\geq$ 210	80% @ $\geq$ 221 20% @ $\geq$ 210	10/EOG	90% @ $\geq$ 231 10% @ $\geq$ 220	90% @ $\geq$ 231 10% @ $\geq$ 220
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<p><i>Organizational &amp;</i></p>	<p><b><i>Organizational &amp; Financial Viability</i></b></p>																		

<i>Financial Viability</i>	
School Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Denver Prep SMART Northwest enrollment will be at 100% of the projected enrollment described in the charter application at the beginning of each year.</li> <li>• 95% of the scholars who begin the school year at West Denver Prep will remain in the school throughout the academic year.</li> <li>• 85% of the scholars who complete the school year at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will re-enroll for the following school year.</li> </ul>
Leadership & Governance Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgets for each school year demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective delivery of the school mission as measured by yearly balanced budget submitted to Denver Public Schools. This budget will be reviewed monthly by the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees.</li> <li>• The soundness of West Denver Prep’s financial records and management will be verified by a yearly unqualified audit by an experienced, independent auditor that will reveal no major material findings and no major exceptions with the school’s fiscal practices.</li> </ul>
Parent and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\geq 90\%</math> of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest parents will read, sign, and return their scholar’s six week progress reports.</li> <li>• 100% response rate for DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey</li> <li>• DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey: <math>\geq 85\%</math> of parents will agree that West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is “providing its child with a quality education.”</li> </ul>

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest measures academic progress in three primary ways:

1. **TCAP.** West Denver Prep administers the TCAP test annually in accordance with Denver Public Schools policies. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest analyzes the TCAP data in a variety of ways. Educators in departments over the summer project TCAP status and growth goals for each student during the summer training program. These data are used for evaluating school-wide performance by the Board of Trustees, evaluating compliance with the accountability plan, and partial calculation of educator bonus awards.
2. **NWEA Measures of Academic Progress.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest administers the NWEA MAP tests three times annually. All scholars take the test in August, December, and April of each academic year. New scholars entering the school take the test in April, allowing for a genuine “spring-to-spring” assessment of progress. Growth is tracked through RIT scores which can be easily converted to grade level equivalencies. All data is evaluated longitudinally considering individual cohort groups of scholars. NWEA MAP data is used to evaluate school-wide performance, to evaluate compliance with the accountability plan, and partial calculation of educator bonus awards.
3. **Interim Assessment Program.** The West Denver SMART Interim Assessment Program (IAP) is the six-week interim assessments used by the school to measure interim scholar progress toward school benchmarks, standards, and state standards. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest uses IA tests in place of the DPS benchmark assessments. These tests are created by educators during the summer program at the completion of the school’s curriculum development process, described in the education program section of this application. Once the summer program has ended, test questions may be reorganized, but the rigorous nature of the content cannot be changed, to ensure high standards and a valid assessment program. After each IA, educators enter results into Data Director that allow for evaluation by scholar, by standard, and by class. IA results are used for both scholar and educator evaluation.

**Longitudinal Student Data.** The types and frequency of scholarly academic data are described above. The Deans of Instruction are responsible for the implementation of all assessments and the analysis of IA data. The School Director is directly involved in analysis of the TCAP and NWEA MAP data. The Board of Trustees regularly reviews TCAP, NWEA MAP, and IA data. Data is used constantly to inform instruction and better hone educational practice. Following each IA spreadsheet analysis, educators submit to their School Director a schedule of re-teaching standards, documenting exactly when and how standards that were not achieved will be re-taught. NWEA MAP data is used more informally, and more rapidly, to modify instruction as well. NWEA MAP and TCAP data are reported to scholars as a group and individually.

**Information Systems.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will use Infinite Campus for primary data and information, as required by DPS. TCAP, NWEA MAP, and IA performance data is gathered, triangulated, and analyzed by a network Director of Technology. The School Director and Chief Executive Officer are regularly involved in the analysis of data and the implementation of appropriate professional development.

**Corrective Action.** The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest curriculum is specifically designed such that at-risk scholars, scholars with disabilities, English Language Learners, and scholars who enter the school below grade level can quickly make up the skill difference and meet the same high standards that are applied consistently throughout the school. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars will have 1.25 to 2 hours of English instruction and 1.25 to 1.5 hours of Mathematics instruction every day with the possibility of more individualized instruction, tutoring, and support classes during and after school. This extensive time on task will provide students who enter the school below grade level with sufficient time and instruction to reach grade level quickly. Interventions and corrective action at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest include the STRIVE Summer Academy, the STRIVE Saturday Academy, individualized and small group intensive tutoring in a STRIVE Study Hall before or after school, SMART Advisory, and College Prep. If any scholar has not sufficiently completed daily homework or performed below expectation on an IA exam, that scholar will attend tutoring or intervention classes during the SMART Advisory. If these changes do not improve scholar performance within a reasonable amount of time, the scholars’ educators will develop an individualized learning plan, including specific instructional strategies for improved achievement, and this plan will be presented and discussed with the scholars’ parents. Close parental communication will be present in all previous steps as well. Should these interventions be insufficient, the Board of Trustees would engage in its own analysis in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer to recommend action in areas of need.

**Scholar Assessment Data.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars are regularly assessed using four primary tools: TCAP, NWEA MAP, EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT, and our Interim Assessments (IAs). The Dean of Instruction and School Director track performance data using these four measures to identify those scholars below grade level or at risk of failing classes. Scholars are placed on a tiered intervention program based on these needs.

Tier 1	Educators give scholars additional and differentiated support in the classroom. This level of intervention is for scholars who have performed poorly on particular assignments or IAs. Educators tailor interventions to individual scholar needs and may also provide support during the SMART Advisory or after school.
Tier 2	Scholars attend a tutoring group during SMART Advisory. All scholars enter tutoring if they fail a class for any six-week period. Scholars may also be placed in tutoring proactively based on TCAP or NWEA MAP scores. Scholars may place out of tutoring by improving grades, which are evaluated every six weeks. During tutoring, scholars

	receive a combination of homework help and skill support specific to the core academic classes. At parent and educator discretion, scholars at this level of intervention may also be placed in daily homework center after school if the poor performance is believed to be the result of failing to complete homework on-time and with academic excellence.
Tier 3	Scholars in need of significant academic support beyond what is provided during the SMART Advisory attend STRIVE Saturday Academy twice a month from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. This level of intervention allows for up to 480 minutes of monthly small-group support, and is primarily reserved for scholars with IEPs that call for this level of support. Scholars may be placed in this intervention based on TCAP scores, IA scores, NWEA MAP, or IEPs.

All intervention placements are flexible. The progress of the scholar during the intervention is monitored and evaluated every six weeks, and new intervention placements are determined.

**Promotion Requirements.** The following promotion policy will be included in the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Scholar & Family Handbook, and it will be discussed with scholars and parents in our home visits prior to enrollment in the school. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest requires scholars to pass all core classes to be promoted to the next grade level. Core Classes include English Language Arts: Literature and Composition, Math, Science, Social Sciences, and Spanish:

- Passing grades in all of his/her core academic classes. Scholars must receive a 70% yearly average in each course in order to receive credit.
- If a scholar earns a grade of lower than 70% at any 6-week progress report, s/he participates in mandatory tutoring during the SMART Advisory for the subsequent six weeks.
- If a scholar fails 1 or 2 Core Classes (English Language Arts: Literature and Composition, Math, Science, Social Sciences, and Spanish) s/he will attend the three-week STRIVE Summer Academy. If, at the end of the STRIVE Summer Academy, s/he is still failing 1 or more Core Classes, s/he will be required to repeat the year.
- If a scholar fails 3 or more Core Classes (English Language Arts: Literature and Composition, Math, Science, Social Sciences, and Spanish) they will automatically repeat the year.
- A scholar who fails an accelerated Core Class will not be required to stay back in his/her current grade, but will be required to either take the course in the summer or retake the course over the following year. The decision will be made at the discretion of the School Director and the educator of the failing course.
- All scholars will complete Service Learning Projects for all four years.
- All scholars will complete a SMART Senior Thesis, SMART Senior Seminar and SMART Senior Exhibition Project.

Should a scholar not meet one of these promotion standards, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest holds the sole right to choose one of the following courses of action for the scholar:

- Require the scholar to repeat the current grade.
- Require the scholar to complete work over the summer in which the scope and expectations are defined by West Denver Prep SMART Northwest. Scholars who fail one course will typically have an opportunity to make up the course during the STRIVE Summer Academy and retake the EOC exam to pass the course and move onto the next grade.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) through written notification no later than the mid-point of the third trimester if the academic performance of the scholar merits consideration for repeating the current grade. Accordingly, West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will communicate expectations to the scholar and parent(s)/guardian(s) about an intervention plan to avoid retention. A final decision will be made at the conclusion of the school year, based on EOC assessments and final grades.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest graduation requirements meet or exceed DPS and CCHE college ready requirements for the state. Below are the minimum high school course requirements for West Denver Prep SMART Northwest:

**Minimum Required Coursework for West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Scholars.**

<b>Core Academic Program for Undergraduate House</b>		
<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Required Years &amp; Credit Hours</b>	<b>Coursework</b>
Literature	2	World Literature & Literature of the Americas
Composition	2	Freshman & Sophomore Composition
Social Sciences	2	AP Human Geography & History of the Americas
Mathematics	2	Algebra I or Geometry & Geometry or Algebra II/Trigonometry
Science	2	Conceptual Physics & AP Biology
Foreign Language	2	Spanish I & Spanish II or AP Spanish Language
Visual Art	2	Introduction to Visual Art & Applied Art History of Mexico
Physical Education	.5	2 Trimesters or an acceptable equivalent approved by the school

<b>Core Academic Program for Graduate House</b>		
<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Required Years &amp; Credit Hours</b>	<b>Coursework</b>
English	2	British Literature & AP English Literature
Social Sciences	2	Western Civilization and AP United States History
Mathematics	2	Math Analysis or Algebra II/Trigonometry & AP Calculus AB or AP Statistics
Science	2	Chemistry & AP Physics B or AP Chemistry or AP Environmental Science
PLTW Engineering	2	Principles of Engineering & Digital Electronics
Foreign Language	1	AP Spanish Language or AP Spanish Literature
Visual Art	1	Digital Art
Physical Education	.5	2 Trimesters or an acceptable equivalent approved by the school
SMART Senior Project	1	1 Trimester for SMART Service Learning Project, 1 Trimester for SMART Thesis, & 1 Trimester for SMART Exhibition
<b>Total Credit Hours: 28</b>		

**Graduation Requirements:** A scholar must meet all of the requirements outlined below to earn a diploma from West Denver Prep SMART Northwest. Only scholars who earn a diploma are permitted to participate in graduation activities.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Core Academic Program</b>
Coursework	Completion of all required courses as listed above
GPA	Cumulative GPA $\geq$ 2.0
Standardized Tests	Completion of TCAP and ACT/SAT (unless waived per IEP)
College Portfolio and Applications	Complete milestones for outlining steps to prepare for college and the necessary college applications.
Service Learning Project	Complete 1 SLP for each year at West Denver Prep SMART

	Northwest
Internship	Complete 1 individualized academic or career interest internship senior year
SMART Senior Project	Complete 1 SMART Senior Project

**Grading Policy:** Grades reflect individual scholar performance and progress toward meeting the Colorado 9-12 Academic Standards for each grading period.

- Grading procedures will take into consideration Individual Education Plans and 504 Plans for scholars with disabilities.
- All scholars with disabilities should receive grades that reflect the level of work they complete consistent with curriculum modifications and/or accommodations identified in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Advanced Placement courses are weighted one grade point higher.
- Class rank is determined by ranking the highest cumulative GPA to the lowest accordingly.
- Physical Education courses are graded Pass/Fail, and they are not included in the calculation of the GPA for the grading period or for cumulative purposes.

Grade	Value	Point	Grade	Value	Point
A	≥94	4.00	C+	75-79	2.33
A-	90-93	3.67	C	70-74	2.00
B+	87-89	3.33			
B	84-86	3.00	Pass	Pass	4.00
B-	80-83	2.67	Fail	Fail	0.00

#### D. English Language Learner Students

The administrative leadership team is in charge of collecting and administering the DPS Home Language Questionnaire. This information will be one piece of many pieces of data used to assess both academic services and family communication plans. West Denver Prep serves its ELL students in accordance with all applicable Federal Laws and Regulations and in compliance with Section 22-24-105 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. The staff of West Denver Prep will adhere to the following plan with ELL students:

- Upon enrollment into the school, all students will receive a home-language survey of languages spoken in the home.
- Students whose dominant language is not English will receive regular assessment of reading, written, and spoken English proficiency through the standard administration of the CELA test.
- Educational Programs will be responsive to students' specific needs and in compliance with state and federal guidelines.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest adopts the specially designed academic instruction in English, SDAIE Model. The purpose of this program is to achieve English proficiency for all students as quickly as possible, while holding the utmost respect for the language and culture of every student who enters the school.

The ELA program at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is designed exclusively to meet our mission. If students are to leave our school and enter, excel in, and graduate from selective four-year colleges and universities, they must read, write, and speak English fluently. Effective delivery of this mission requires that we teach our students English. In this program, students of limited English proficiency receive the same academic content as those students who are native speakers of English. All classroom instruction will take place in English. However, the level of English used for written and spoken instruction will be scaffolded appropriately for ELL students as necessary with the stated purpose of holding every student to high academic standards.

Students are never prevented from speaking in their native language, either inside or outside of the classroom. The school will create the most accepting cultural atmosphere possible, such that students of all backgrounds and languages feel welcome and valued. Whenever possible, West Denver Prep takes reasonable measures to ensure that an adult who speaks the student's native language is present in the classroom, and actively recruits bilingual educators for this purpose. For any parent with limited English proficiency, all school correspondence, written and verbal, is communicated in the parent's native language. Teachers at West Denver Prep receive professional development on appropriate support for students designated as English Language Learners. Students will not be excluded from any curricular or extracurricular activities based on their level of English proficiency. Students will not be placed in Special Education classes based on their level of English proficiency.

The academic program at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is well suited for high performance for English Language Learners. Most prominently, students receive 140 minutes of literacy instruction daily that intentionally builds 21<sup>st</sup> century listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills from the cultural capital of our student population. In the 2010-2011 study conducted by the University of Colorado at Denver in conjunction with Denver Public Schools, West Denver Prep's Federal Campus achieved the highest ELL student growth of any middle school in Denver, by a wide margin. We believe these results present compelling evidence for the efficacy of this program with English Language Learners at West Denver Prep. This study was made available to the district, and it is available to the review team upon request.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest supports the English Language Development of our scholars through a combination of a whole-school approach of maximizing English language development for all scholars and an individualized approach of targeted interventions (one-to-one and small group intensives) for scholars identified based on CELA scores and other measures of language development progress. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest uses a significant number of whole-school and research-based strategies that strongly support the English Language Development of our scholars. These strategies are supported by the SIOP model and best practices in English Language Development instruction, through a structured immersion program, the SDAIE Model. We continue to refine the way in which our Structured Immersion (SDAIE) Model has yielded the highest growth scores for EL scholars at the middle school level in the district. First and foremost, both the middle and high school models subscribe to the 'language as a resource' orientation; and more emphatically, our model is not a 'subtractive bilingual' one (Ruiz, 1988). Our educators and scholars use L1 when it is appropriate and necessary to create a nexus for deeper understanding of content skills and concepts. Second, while we subscribe to the SDAIE model, we are fully cognizant of how the Cummins Quadrants approach holds sway in transitioning our scholars along the NEP→LEP→FEP continuum, and further how we consciously transition EL scholars from BICS to CALP (1994). Our program is informed and supported by the SIOP research and practices of Jana Echevarría, Anne Graves, Anna Uhl Chamot, and Mary Ellen Vogt. As mentioned previously, we fully understand the vital connection and relationship that culture and language play in the lives of our scholars, especially as they transition from BICS→CALP and NEP→LEP→FEP. That is to say, our scholars already possess cultural funds of knowledge through their developing bilingualism, and we honor this proficiency by intentionally expanding upon the cultural relevance of our instructional texts, practices, scaffolding, and school culture (Cummins, 1994; Moll, 1990; Rueda & Genzruk, 2001).

Due to our cooperative and thematic learning environment in both the Undergraduate and Graduate Houses, our EL scholars benefit from the intentional repetition and varied contextual usage of target vocabulary and key content skills and concepts across the curriculum. In doing so, we further

contextualize the core content subjects to maximize their comprehensibility (Echevarría & Short, 2010). At the beginning of each class, there is a spiraled 'Do Now' reading comprehension activity from the previous day, and it serves as both an anticipatory set and scaffold for new learning. Educators use the 'Do Now' to reinforce concepts and reading comprehension skills; and in so doing, they begin each lesson by activating background knowledge and giving scholars an opportunity to use the think-pair-share to discuss their responses. Through this collaborative effort, our scholars have intentional opportunities to model for one another, develop their oral language skills, and ameliorate any 'affective filters' (Echevarría & Short, 2010). Educators frontload target vocabulary (T2 and T3 vocabulary—no more than three words) from the target text at the onset of the lesson, and scholars track this vocabulary through the use of a graphic organizer sheet and index cards. Wherever necessary and appropriate, educators illustrate the cognates and/or root words for the target vocabulary. Whenever appropriate and necessary, educators additionally use realia, visualizations, and gestures/movement to extend meaning for the target vocabulary in its varied contexts (Cummins & Miramontes, 2005).

In this manner, educators are consciously teaching language through content (Freeman & Freeman, 2007). Moreover, all scholars will benefit from Cornell Note-Taking and Interactive Notebook Systems for each subject area that contain additional graphic and visual organizers, repeated definitions of key terms and vocabulary, as well as a step-by-step/scaffolded approach for building proficiency for both content and language development. Literary texts and cultural artifacts are most often selected for their ability to create an immediate connection to the language and cultural experiences of our EL scholars; and in doing so, educators consciously honor the cultural capital of their scholars (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2010). Based upon EL designations, scholars are oftentimes flexibly grouped, and they are consistently given opportunities to collaborate and cooperate in small groups. Depending on the daily learning objective, scholars benefit from multiple opportunities to build and model content knowledge and English language development collectively, whether it is building oral fluency and expression and/or reading comprehension skills (Tomlinson, 2001; Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 2005). At the discretion of our educators, wherever appropriate and necessary, the use of L1 is used to supplement direct instruction for content skill and concept recognition (Freeman & Freeman, 2007). Scholars participate in and benefit from our daily balanced literacy program that provides for multiple and meaningful opportunities for our scholars to build oral fluency and expression and reading comprehension skills through modeled, shared, interactive, and guided instruction. Throughout each six-week interim, all reading educators conference with scholars to update oral fluency levels, check for appropriateness and comprehension of independent reading texts, and monitor reading levels (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Peregoy & Boyle, 2008):

- Separate Composition block for 55 minutes that focuses on grammar and complex sentence structures
- Extended school day
- Consistent school culture that maximizes time on task in each class
- SMART Daily Learning Objectives and Exit Tickets for every class to measure daily scholar progress and thoughtful use of this data, both at the site and network level
- Strong vocabulary instruction
- Regular direct instruction in reading and writing content
- Strong visual culture (word walls, scholar-produced Interactive Notebooks, SMART Boards in all classrooms)
- Goal of every scholar speaking in every class every day
- Safe space to learn (no making fun of others or fear of being mocked)



For scholars for whom this whole-school support is insufficient, scholars receive additional small group-interventions. Specific programming for these interventions has included Language! and Rosetta Stone.

- We intend to use English Language Development standards to address transference of skills and knowledge from L1 in all core content classes. With a block of reading and a separate block for writing, we drill down further with these standards by also aligning them with the Colorado Academic P-12 Standards: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development; Reading Comprehension; and Literary Response and Analysis. We use a combination of individualized tutoring, small group intensive modeling, and computer-assisted learning to supplement these interventions.
- Scholars receive attentive and responsive progress monitoring on a three-week basis using a variety of AIMSWEB tools, and are placed in or out of interventions based on this data.
- While West Denver Prep SMART Northwest utilizes a SDAEI model, both native language support for scholars and families and cultural relevance are high priorities throughout our organization. More than half of our network staff speaks fluent Spanish, the home language of the vast majority of our current English Language Learners. All home communication is in the preferred language of the parents. Scholars receive native language support in the classroom on an as-needed basis to support both their social development and access to academic content.
- We do not have a prescribed ELD block. As mentioned; however, we feel that the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest SDAIE model provides a robust and meaningful number of supports (as detailed above) for EL scholars to meaningfully and respectfully transfer content skills and knowledge from L1 to L2.
- The SMART Advisory serves as a means to internalize the necessary organizational skills to meet and surpass the rigor of a four-year college or university. If necessary, however, the SMART advisory can more explicitly support this organizational goal by providing small group intensive interventions to meet the content and language development of EL scholars.
- The SMART Seminar is an explicit CALLA model that provides our scholars with opportunities to learn grade-appropriate content that develops listening, reading, speaking and writing proficiencies accordingly. Due to the nature of the seminar, scholars are both active and reflexive learners, and they utilize their prior knowledge to build comprehension for new and more complex and higher level learning along thematic-based discussions (Chamot, 1995).

English Language Development is a regular strand of West Denver Prep's network professional development. Throughout the three-week summer session, West Denver Prep educators receive explicit training on each of the whole-school elements described above, and these elements are monitored closely through our standard system of bi-weekly observations. In addition, several summer workshops focus explicitly on techniques for building language development with individual scholars, when and how to provide native language supports, and understanding the SIOP model. Educators who provide specific interventions described above receive small-group training on those interventions. In 2011, the University of Colorado at Denver completed an ELL study in conjunction with DPS. This study found that among DPS middle schools with at least three years of data, ELL scholars at West Denver Prep's Federal Campus achieved the highest growth scores of any school in Denver, by a wide margin. This study identified the following aspects of West Denver Prep's and other successful programs as critical to the English Language Development of its scholars:

Schoolwide practices to focus student attention and maximize effort:

- Culture of Achievement and Engagement
- Teacher and Student Self-Selection
- Formative Feedback to Students

- STRIVE Dollars Incentive System
- Parents as Allies

Sustained Instruction tailored for English Language Learners

- Extended Academic Time
- Scaffolding for Multilingual students
- Direct Instruction Focused on Specific Learning Objectives

Organization to maximize likelihood of effective instructional activities across classrooms

- Strong Stable Leadership
- Attention to Teacher Induction and Professional Development
- Extensive Use of Data
- Structures to Maximize Student Engagement and Time-on-Task

West Denver Prep intends to replicate these elements in its new middle schools, and draw on these elements as the basis of the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest high school program to ensure that English Language Learners continue to make exceptional academic growth throughout our network. All previously ELL students who have achieved sufficient proficiency in English and no longer need a language assistance program (according to the District’s assessment procedure) are identified and fully mainstreamed.

**Criteria for Exit/Redesignation from ELL Program.** Criteria for exit/redesignation include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Student’s ability to score a level 5 (Advanced Proficient) on the CELA Exam. The CELA Exam score insures that all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are assessed before a student is exited from ELL services. Below are the minimum cut scores for each corresponding grade level taken from the CELA Assessment Overall Proficiency Level Table<sup>5</sup>:

Grade 9/FEP/600-675	Grade 10/FEP/603-675	Grade 11/FEP/605-675	Grade 12/FEP/607-675
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- Student meets (Proficient) or exceeds (Advanced) the State standards as measured by TCAP in Reading, Writing, Science, and Math assessments.
- Student’s observed ability to function effectively in mainstream classes and to progress as well as English proficient peers. This includes being able to work at the pace of the class and being able to use regular mainstream classroom materials. Students should be performing at or above grade level in mainstream English, math and social studies classes, as well as produce a writing sample at grade level proficiency.
- Qualitative and quantitative input from the teachers and parents are considered.
- Preponderance of grade level work of curriculum objectives documented by grades.
- Parent requests for exit from the ELL program may at times supersede some of the above criteria, but parents must sign a waiver asking that their students not be assigned to ELL services. Educational consequences and outcomes of this decision are carefully explained to parents or guardians prior to making the decision.

**Exit/Redesignation of ELLs.** Students who meet the exit criteria are identified to be exited from the ELL program and are monitored for two years by the Dean of Instruction. Exit records therefore indicate that the student’s academic success will be monitored for at least two years after exit from ELL services. This follow up is done by the Dean of Instruction in tandem with the administrative leadership team and

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<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/cela/2009/CELApro%202008%20FINAL%20Standard%20Setting%20Technical%20Report.pdf/>

mainstream teachers. The Dean of Instruction notifies classroom teachers, the administrative leadership team, and parents, all of whom must agree and sign the district ELA Redesignation Review Form. Documentation of the exit decision is included in the student's cumulative folder as well as copies of those records maintained in the Dean of Instruction's files.

**Monitoring Exited/Redesignated ELLs.** Monitoring is required for two years after a student exits ELL program services and appropriate records of student progress will be maintained by the Dean of Instruction. Monitoring may include any or all of the following:

- Trimester review of grades
- Local and interim assessments
- Required state assessments
- Teacher observation
- Teachers may offer support to monitored students as they would for any student seeking additional assistance with classroom work, instruction, or assessment.
- Monitoring is not an extension of the language instructional program.
- Students who are monitored will not be counted as ELLs in any state or federal data collection systems for the purpose of acquiring state or federal funding.

#### **E. Special Education Students**

The appropriate education of special education students in the least restrictive environment at West Denver Prep is an essential priority. West Denver Prep will fully comply with all district, state, and federal guidelines for the effective delivery of services to all special education students. West Denver Prep will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title 11 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. West Denver Prep understands that the school is required to purchase special education services from Denver Public Schools, most specifically including development of individualized education programs (IEPs), handling administrative proceedings, and providing necessary specialized services. The staff of West Denver Prep, led by the Special Education teacher and supported by the CEO and our Network Specialist for Special Education (a new position in 2011), will participate in developing IEPs, identify and refer students for assessment of special education needs, maintain records and collaborate in the delivery of these services as appropriate. West Denver Prep fully supports the inclusion of a severe-needs program in our network, and will be meeting with the district in April, 2011, to make plans for such a program in 2012. Presently, we propose adding this program at our Lake Campus, and serving students throughout West Denver, though we intend to collaborate closely with the district on these matters. We would also welcome the opportunity to serve severe-needs students on an individual basis provided that reasonable funding is made available to provide additional supports for these students.

West Denver Prep will implement Response to Intervention procedures rigorously; the process will be facilitated by the Data and Intervention Specialist (DIS). The DIS will train and facilitate a Student Intervention team that will include an administrator, general education teacher, intervention teacher, and the parents. This DIS also works with all general education teachers to support differentiation and Tier I interventions such as the SIOP Sheltered English model in an attempt to reach a diversity of learners in the general education classroom. The DIS and SIT team will implement a universal screening using normative data tools (AIMSWEB) and other curriculum based measures to identify students for Tier II interventions that target specific areas of need. These Tier II interventions include, but are not limited to, small group instruction within the general education classroom, ELL supports and programming, affective education, and research based programs. The progress of students receiving Tier II interventions will be monitored weekly by SIT and the DIS. If students aren't achieving their aim-line or responding to these Tier II interventions (6 week period), they will be referred for Tier III interventions and the SIT team will work to identify a root cause of the academic struggle and create a full SIT plan to

address this need. All Tier III interventions will be researched. These interventions will include, but are not limited to, the Wilson Reading System, REWARDS reading program, Language! with ELL applications, Reading Advantage, Step Up to Writing, ALEKS, and Why Try. All SIT plans will be closely monitored and measured for efficacy; the team will make alterations when necessary and give referrals to Special Education when necessary.

West Denver Prep engages in a thorough recruiting effort within the neighborhoods we serve. All 5<sup>th</sup> grade families receive contact and are invited to enter our lottery or confirm boundary placement. Once students are admitted in the lottery, we work to identify which students have IEPs. In early April we begin to contact their elementary schools to schedule transition meetings with their parents and providers. It is important that we reach out to families and teachers in order to express our excitement about their student attending WDP and to prepare ourselves for excellent service delivery. This practice has enabled our providers to create relationships with local elementary providers which have the potential to create future recommendations for students with IEPs to attend the WDP network. Costs associated with students with mild, moderate, and severe needs are allocated in the school's budget according to DPS policy. Currently, the school supports mild/moderate needs students at approximately the ratio of 1 full-time special educator for every 12 mild/moderate students, or 2.5 FTE for approximately 30 students at full build-out. The school looks forward to working with the district to support students with severe needs with appropriate funding allocation to the school. WDP will identify students with special education needs through our RTI model. As described above, the DIS and SIT team will create individual SIT plans (that include indentifying a targeted area of need and setting/monitoring a goal) for students whose academic achievement is at risk and for whom Tier II interventions did not yield appropriate growth. Students will be closely progress monitored with normative tools while receiving Tier III interventions. After targeted interventions have been delivered for at least 6 weeks, students that continue to fall in the range of severe risk (13<sup>th</sup> percentile and below), and for whom other indicators such as poor attendance and language acquisition have been ruled out, will be referred to the Special Education team. In the case of behavior deregulation, a Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan (that includes research based affective education) would be closely monitored for progress as well. The Special Education team will use the benchmark and progress monitoring data compiled by the SIT team, along with targeted assessments such as the BASC, TOWL-4, Key Math, and the GORT-4, to identify educational disabilities (per district model) and the need for specially designed instruction. WDP will implement the RTI/SIT process systemically and purposively in order to avoid the misidentification of a disability. Also, the team will work to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is considered throughout the process. English Language Learners in the RTI process will have their language acquisition and their area of academic need addressed simultaneously. In considering progress and response to intervention, ELL students will be compared to other students that have similar language development, as opposed to typical normative data in an attempt to avoid misidentification. ELL students that are being considered for Special Education referrals will be referred to the district's Multilingual Assessment Team for assessment in their native language.

The Special Education team provides a continuum of services to support student success in the general education curriculum. These services include direct instruction outside of the general education classroom, integrated instruction and support inside the general education classroom, behavior interventions, and consultation. WDP schedules LRE services based on various assessment data including CSAP, NWEA MAPs, CBMs, targeted assessments, and general education grades. IEP students are included in the general education Reading, Writing, and Math classes; also, they are often included in content areas such Science and World Studies. Special Education providers "push in" to general education courses. These integrated services are tailored to the needs of the classroom, and therefore they vary. These providers may collaborate with the general education teacher to differentiate the

lesson, co-teach, pull a small group for a mini-lesson, support individual students and groups during independent practice, integrate interventions such as 6 Minute Solutions, facilitate guided reading groups, integrate multimodality supports such as classroom visuals and manipulatives, provide ELL support, provide accommodations, and support assistive technology. Direct services outside of the general education classroom are mostly reserved for targeted instruction of discrete skills with remediation and research based programs. Such researched based interventions include the Wilson Reading System, REWARDS reading system, Language! with ELL applications, Reading Advantage, Step Up to Writing, ALEKS, Math Elevations, Spellography, and Why Try. Students with IEPs that have stronger skill sets can also access these interventions in the Tier II general education, and therefore are enabled to be further included in content areas. Direct services can also include intensive support of general education objectives via pre-teaching, extended independent practice, re-teaching, and conceptual applications. The overall objective of these direct services is to support student growth and therefore their ability to access the general education curriculum and achieve the post secondary goal of attending a 4 year university. Special education providers also facilitate positive behavioral supports for students with emotional and developmental disabilities. The Student Service Coordinator facilitates the school psychologist, social worker, and speech pathologist to provide 1:1 and group clinical supports. Case managers track student progress in the general education and provide tutoring and homework support during the Enrichment period and Homework Center to further support student success. Case managers use baseline data to set a targeted goal in the student's area of disability, closely monitor the student's progress with curriculum based measures and behavior observation tools, and communicates the student's progress to administration, general education teachers, and parents. The provider uses this data to target the areas in need of a goal with specialized instruction and research based methods and interventions. The case manager compiles all academic data points (diagnostic, benchmark, and progress monitoring) in a data file that drives the individualized service delivery for that student. 100% of West Denver Prep teachers, including special education teachers, are Highly Qualified. West Denver Prep hires licensed special education teachers. More information on the selection of staff can be found in the Leadership & Staffing section. The West Denver Prep network is committed to having a strong central administration and leadership that serve the schools. The network has a Network Special Education Specialist position to support our schools in providing excellent services to students with special needs. This leader will select and provide ongoing professional development to special education teachers. These opportunities will include trainings in specially designed instruction including research based interventions, special education best practices, Functional Behavioral Assessments and Positive Behavior Supports, assistive technology, and special education policy/procedures. Also, teachers engage in an intensive 2-3 week summer institute that includes various workshops and trainings. Special education providers are also afforded a professional development stipend so they can seek professional development opportunities in the education community.

#### **F. Academic Intervention and Acceleration**

As described above, the DIS and SIT team will create individual SIT plans (that include indentifying a targeted area of need and setting/monitoring a goal) for students whose academic achievement is at risk and for whom Tier II interventions did not yield appropriate growth. Students will be closely progress monitored with normative tools while receiving Tier III interventions. After targeted interventions have been delivered for at least 6 weeks, students that continue to fall in the range of severe risk (13<sup>th</sup> percentile and below), and for whom other indicators such as poor attendance and language acquisition have been ruled out, will be referred to the Special Education team. In the case of behavior deregulation, a Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plan (that includes research based affective education) would be closely monitored for progress as well. The Special Education team will use the benchmark and progress monitoring data compiled by the SIT team, along with targeted assessments such as the BASC, TOWL-4, Key Math, and the GORT-4, to identify

educational disabilities (per district model) and the need for specially designed instruction. WDP will implement the RTI/SIT process systemically and purposively in order to avoid the misidentification of a disability. Also, the team will work to ensure that cultural and linguistic diversity is considered throughout the process. English Language Learners in the RTI process will have their language acquisition and their area of academic need addressed simultaneously. In considering progress and response to intervention, ELL students will be compared to other students that have similar language development, as opposed to typical normative data in an attempt to avoid misidentification. ELL students that are being considered for Special Education referrals will be referred to the district's Multilingual Assessment Team for assessment in their native language.

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**For High Schools Only.** The entire SMART Academy design is organized around an asset-based thinking (ABT) framework, such that our scholars fully understand the deeper cultural context of our school culture. From this challenging, relevant, and purposeful school culture, every aspect of our day-to-day operations is premised on the notion that our scholars become incrementally more intelligent based upon their high levels of authentic participation and engagement. We have focused on the Dobbie and Fryer, Jr. Index of Five to further develop our systems and structures for students at-risk: frequent teacher feedback (SMART Teacher Evaluation Framework), data-driven instruction (SMART Assessment Framework), high-dosage tutoring (STRIVE Study Hall, College Prep, SMART Summer Academy, & STRIVE Saturday Academy), increased instructional time (25% more instructional time than traditional DPS high schools); & high expectations (SMART Mission, Vision, & Culture).

### **G. Gifted and Talented Students**

In general, the challenging and relevant liberal arts academic program at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is sufficiently rigorous for gifted and talented scholars. More importantly, our instructional strategies that focus on academic differentiation are informed by and aligned with the best instructional practices for GT scholars. Scholars receive advanced work in all of their classes, which is additional challenging work that they may complete after finishing their own class work. A school-wide reading challenge encourages and rewards Independent Reading. Scholars are encouraged to participate in after-school academic, cultural, or leadership clubs. The culture focused on achievement and academic rigor encourages such activities and inspires scholars to engage in different, challenging academic

endeavors. Still, should such accommodations not be sufficient to adequately challenge a given scholar, the school would take up an individualized plan with that scholar and their family. Such a plan might include alternative classroom placements, additional projects, or independent study activities.

#### **H. Supplemental Programming**

**SMART Summer Colloquium.** As research rightfully asserts, academic achievement within the freshman year looms large as a predictor for success in high school and graduation from college (Allensworth & Easton, 2005). The SMART Summer Colloquium provides a challenging and relevant education of high standards, structure, and accountability by providing substantive discussions, lectures, project-based, and colectivo<sup>6</sup>-building learning activities. The West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Summer Colloquium meets from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. every day for a full week prior to the first day of school with a culminating ceremony at its conclusion.

**STRIVE Saturday Academy.** West Denver Prep STRIVE Saturday Academy exists for two purposes: 1.) to provide an additional academic support measure to ensure that all scholars remain on track to graduate to and through college; 2.) to provide additional behavioral support to ensure that all scholars remain on track to graduate to and through college. Based upon academic performance data from our four primary assessment tools: TCAP, NWEA MAP, EXPLORE/PLAN/ACT, and our Interim Assessments (IAs), West Denver Prep SMART Northwest identifies those scholars below grade level or at risk of failing classes. Scholars are assigned to the STRIVE Saturday Academy either proactively, or at the discretion of SMART educators in consult with the Dean of Instruction and School Director in response to poor performance on IAs and other summative assessments. In the latter instance, based upon the STRIVE Rubric System, scholars are automatically assigned to the STRIVE Saturday Academy, and they report directly to the Dean of Students.

**SMART Summer Academy.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest offers a remedial tutoring and class work program for scholars who have failed one or more classes during the year. Attendance is limited to those scholars who have failed one or two (but not more) of the six core content classes at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest: Literature, Composition, Math, Science, Social Sciences, and Spanish. Based on four years of middle school data, attendance will be approximately 15-20% of the scholar population. Scholars attend the summer academy for four hours daily for three weeks, and a budget for summer school educators is included in the regular budget for the school. Scholars complete individual and group activities specifically tailored to their areas of low performance during the school year. At the conclusion of this three-week session, scholars take an exit exam based on the standards of the curriculum for the entire year. If scholars pass all given exams, they will be promoted to the next grade; if not, they will be retained in the current grade.

**STRIVE Study Hall.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest provides for small group and one-to-one tutoring sessions before and after school on a need-basis. Scholars who underperform with assessments or assignments will receive additional content or organizational support from a designated faculty or administrative member for each six-week interim period. Scholars are also encouraged to organize themselves into focused study groups to work collaboratively to support one another.

**SMART Extracurricular Activities.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest provides for extracurricular activities from 4:05 P.M. to 6:05 P.M. with extended programs where appropriate and as scholar interest demands. During the West Denver Prep SMART Northwest Summer Colloquium, scholars in consult with their educators decide upon the start-up of the first trimester and year-long clubs, extracurricular activities, and intramural sports. West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will apply to the Colorado High School Activities Association to compete within the 3A Frontier League for the following

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<sup>6</sup> West Denver Prep SMART Northwest is a colectivo, a professional collective of learners, who are unconditionally committed to one goal: to ensure that all West Denver Prep SMART Northwest scholars gain unconditional admission into and graduate from four-year colleges and universities without the need of remediation.

proposed sports: boys tackle football and baseball; girls softball and volleyball; boys and girls cross-country, soccer, basketball, and tennis. Scholars participate in extracurricular activities and team sports contingent on passing core academic classes; therefore, scholars who are not passing, or who have regular issues with completing daily homework, participate in various forms of tutoring during this time.



## Section IV: TEACHING

### I. Teacher Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention

Applicants for all staff positions are aggressively recruited beginning on December 1 of each year, primarily using local and national partners and online job boards. Some of these include: Teach for America, The Breakthrough Collaborative, The Colorado League of Charter Schools, Denver Public Schools, a variety of local and national universities and schools of education, LatPro, and many others. Applicants with promising resumes are called for 30-minute phone screens, and applicants that pass this screen are invited for in-person, full-day interviews that involve teaching a sample lesson, observing a lesson, and meeting with educators and all members of the administrative team. The school fills positions only with “Highly Qualified” staff or staff that have obvious capacity to obtain “Highly Qualified” status quickly by completing a degree or passing the PLACE or PRAXIS exams. Currently, 100% of West Denver Prep’s staff is highly qualified. The schools have a waiver from exclusively licensed staff. The school’s hiring process is rigorous, and it involves résumé review, phone interviews, and in-person interviews. Staffs who have received an offer receive a hire letter and are then responsible for obtaining a criminal background check from Denver Public Schools. This rigorous process has resulted in a high degree of excellent faculty and a high degree of retention (80% across the network in 2011). Still, in the unlikely event of a bad fit, the school will document performance concerns and proceed as needed with dismissal in accordance with at-will employment law and the policies in our employee handbook.

West Denver Prep will hire educators for new campuses during the regular timeline for hiring, posting jobs on December 1 and considering candidates through the winter and spring until the positions are filled. However, West Denver Prep will also have the opportunity of moving educators from one of the existing schools, to preserve both best practices and collaboration across campuses. The existence of multiple campuses also allows the school to develop a strong leadership pipeline for educators. As a result, more educators can explore leadership opportunities and develop a strong leadership pipeline for educators.

Primary criteria for hiring teachers include mission compatibility, demonstrated student achievement with a similar student population, cultural competence, the capacity to communicate and work effectively across differences of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, among others, communication skills, and work ethic/resilience. Candidates are evaluated for each of these qualities through resume review, writing samples, phone screens, sample teaching activities, and in-person interviews.

### J. Teacher Coaching

At West Denver Prep, teacher coaching and evaluation center on improving student achievement. Administrators support teachers by reviewing student academic data, supporting management, and supporting implementation of school-wide cultural and instructional norms. West Denver Prep uses Doug Lemov’s Teach Like a Champion book as a primary resource and teachers are regularly coached on the implementation and refinement of these techniques. West Denver Prep uses a network-wide teacher effectiveness rubric (Appendix N) currently being reviewed for the 2012-2013 school year. Coaching feedback should align with these priorities.

The School Director and Dean of Instruction are responsible for coaching teachers on a regular schedule discussed with the CEO or Chief Schools Officer. Peer observations are at the discretion of each campus and are currently used at most West Denver Prep schools on a trimester basis.

Teachers receive feedback at least every two weeks. Typically, the School Director and the Dean of Instruction will share the coaching load such that each teacher receives one informal observation of approximately 25 minutes every two weeks and either receives written feedback, a 15 minute debrief/check-in, or both. Formal observations take place three times annually, include a formal debrief of one hour, the completion of the entire rubric, and the participation of both administrators.

The teacher evaluation tool has been developed over the six years of West Denver Prep's operations using best practices from a series of Charter Management Organizations nationally and the input for many West Denver Prep administrators.

Administrators review instructional plans on the same schedule as informal observations and planning is a significant portion of the rubric. In addition, each subject area has an instructional specialist who supports the development and review of curriculum materials.

A detailed schedule for classroom observations and feedback discussions with teachers is discussed in the following subsection.

#### **K. Teacher Evaluation**

Evaluation of educators is the responsibility of the School Director. The School Director observes educators informally on a weekly basis, provides written feedback of strengths and challenges, and a conference if necessary. The School Director also observes each educator formally three times a year, completing a detailed observation protocol for a full-period observation. This protocol is detailed in Appendix N. Twice a year, educators formally meet with their School Director for a mid-year review, where performance is discussed with respect to the formal evaluations and the scholar performance data that informs bonus calculations, as discussed above. Educators will also receive regular classroom evaluations and curriculum conferences with their respective Dean of Instruction.

Teacher and administrator evaluations are tied directly to the goals on the accountability plan (please see the Performance Management Section of this application for details of the accountability plan). The Chief Executive Officer evaluation is 60% objective, based on accountability plan data, and 40% subjective, and is executed by the Board of Trustees. The School Director is evaluated in a similar manner, by the Chief Executive Officer. Other administrator evaluations, whose roles are less directly related to student achievement, have a 50% objective and 50% subjective evaluation, because the academic success of the school remains paramount.

West Denver Prep handles poor performance in accordance with its employee handbook; consistently low performance results in additional conferences with the School Director and Chief Executive Officer, a performance management plan with regular monitoring, and, if these measures do not improve performance, possible termination. The Board of Trustees consults with the Chief Executive Officer regarding any possible termination, and is well informed about the status of any performance management plan.

We do not plan on using LEAP at this time. We believe that the teacher evaluation system we have developed better suits the culture and instructional goals of West Denver Prep.

#### **L. Professional Development**

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest educators will complete a summer induction program of two weeks for returning faculty and three weeks for new faculty. The first week of this program, for educators new to the school, is committed to review the instructional policies and procedures,

professional development specific to curriculum design and daily instructional practices, and the school administrative systems. During the subsequent three weeks, educators create or revise curricula based on four primary elements:

- Item analysis of test questions from TCAP released items, NWEA MAP, ACT EXPLORE and PLAN, PSAT/NMSQT, and other tests to create a list of knowledge and skills necessary for scholar success. This list is then referenced against CO state standards and district benchmarks.
- Educators write a list of West Denver Prep SMART Northwest standards, using the item analysis, state standards, and district benchmarks. One year of curriculum at West Denver Prep includes approximately 50 standards which are more specific and detailed than state standards.
- Educators use their standards list to build a Curriculum Alignment Template (CAT), which includes a daily learning objective for every class for the entire year, along with plans and objectives regarding implementation and assessment.
- Educators write our Interim Assessment Examinations (IA's), evaluating approximately 8 standards per six-week period.

The primary professional development during the year takes place at West Denver Prep SMART Northwest every other Friday afternoons from 2:30 P.M. – 4:30 P.M. An early dismissal of scholars allows for this weekly time for educators to analyze data, meet in department or grade level groups, and participate in workshops led by the Deans of Instruction and the School Director. In addition to these meetings, academic departments meet together for at least one 45-minute period weekly. Educators have daily common planning time with educators of common disciplines and use this time to evaluate the quality of their lesson plans and daily packets.

After each IA Examination, educators gather assessment data into analysis spreadsheets. These spreadsheets allow educators to view individual student performance, class performance by question, and class performance by standard, as well as cohort and all-school trends. Educators complete a simple summary worksheet that indicates when and how they plan to re-teach low-performing standards and how scholars who are receiving tutoring support should be taught. Professional development time is reserved every six weeks for this analysis. Based on these analyses and the subsequent discussions with educators, the School Director and Deans of Instruction modify the professional development plan for the following six weeks.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest professional development will sharpen our focus of the professional learning community's decisions in order to grow talents and performance around three linked spheres:

- SMART Environment
- SMART Culture
- SMART Instructional Practices

In the founding year, the theory of action will intentionally build the framework for SMART Culture (with evaluative metrics) during week one of the four-week Summer Institute Training. Those metrics will be used thereafter to track and monitor our growth and execution of a series of linked routines, procedures, and high expectations for behavior. While the particulars of this framework are being developed, we know that we will actualize procedures, protocols, and routines that will build the habits of mind and practice for our entire professional learning community. In weeks two through four, we will use the SMART cultural framework to guide our curricular and instructional development goal-setting. In addition to aligning our curriculum to the Colorado Academic 9-12 Standards, we will also identify and align the higher-order College Board and ACT College Readiness standards. We will build and codify the

SMART Instructional Practices that place differentiation at the foundation (and not at the margins) to challenge and empower scholars to meet and surpass standards-based grade levels.

### Themes and Topics

<b>Structure</b>	Operational Organization	Student Management Systems	Communication Protocols
<b>Vision and Mission Fidelity</b>	Creativity and Innovation	Intentional Curricular Alignment and Adaptations	Purposeful Social Agency Theories of Action
<b>Accountability</b>	Results-Oriented Analysis	Standardized Test Performance Analysis	SMART Assessment Cycle and Analysis
<b>Leadership</b>	Developing Staff Leadership Capacity	Framework for Giving/Receiving Critical Feedback	Managing Conflict/Difficult Conversations
<b>Cultural Leadership</b>	Building Culture with Staff	Building Culture with Students	Building SMART Cultural Competence
<b>Instructional Leadership</b>	Curricula Planning and Writing	Using Student Data to Drive Improvement	Instructional Strategies and Practices

### Tentative Professional Development Schedule

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT
Tuesday	8/21/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	8/28/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting
Monday	9/17/2013	8:00-4:30pm	Data Day (includes one PD workshop)
Tuesday	10/2/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	10/9/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting
Monday	10/29/2013	8:00-4:30pm	Data Day (includes one PD workshop)
Tuesday	11/6/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	11/27/2013	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting
Thursday	1/3/2014	8:00-4:30pm	Data Day (includes one PD workshop)
Tuesday	1/15/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	1/29/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting
Monday	2/11/2014	8:00-4:30pm	Data Day (includes one PD workshop)
Tuesday	2/26/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	3/12/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting
Monday	4/15/2014	8:00-4:30pm	Data Day (includes one PD workshop)
Tuesday	4/30/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Professional Development
Tuesday	5/14/2014	5:30-6:30pm	Instructional Leadership Team Meeting

The professional development program is evaluated quarterly by the senior administration through a goal-setting exercise. However, the true evaluation of the program is the achievement of our scholars. If the school is not meeting regular performance goals, then the Deans of Instruction and School Director will review and revise the program to meet these needs.

## Section V: GOVERNANCE

### A. Governance Philosophy

The Board of Trustees will continue to have a close relationship with the CEO. Each board member will meet regularly with the CEO (or the COO, when appropriate) to evaluate, support, or engage in their area of expertise. Between meetings, regular communication between board members and the CEO ensures that time is well spent on achieving these annual objectives. The board is also exploring a mentoring system, where each board member is paired with a specific school leader or central office leader for additional support. Each campus will have its own Parent Council, under the composition described in the charter school law for Advisory Councils. The Parent Councils will be composed of the building Principal, an educator representative, two appointed community members, and three elected parents.

### B. Board Capacity and Structure

The current West Denver Prep Board of Trustees is composed of 11 members who meet monthly to govern the network and support the mission. Primary roles of the Board of Trustees include:

- Hiring and evaluation of the CEO
- Regular evaluation of the school's academic program and evaluation of progress on accountability plan measures
- Oversight of the school's financial matters
- Ensure the school occupies effective and affordable facilities
- Raise sufficient private resources to support the school's program
- Evaluate parent and community satisfaction with the school's program and respond to inquiries and concerns

Below is a list of board members (current officers followed by current members, followed by prospective members) with areas of expertise in bold and a brief summary of their interest. Please see the attached board member surveys for more information regarding their specific areas of interest.

**John Aragon, Retired Cable Industry Executive.** John retired in 2011 as vice president of Government Affairs for Comcast Cable. During his career spanning more than four decades, John served in senior leadership roles for U S West, MediaOne and Comcast, with responsibilities for legislative, regulatory, public relations, community affairs and philanthropic initiatives. A Vietnam veteran and former newspaper reporter, John has also served on numerous industry and community boards throughout his career, with special emphasis on organizations dedicated to promoting educational opportunities for at-risk youth and diversity in the workplace.

**Michael Barkin, KRG Capital, Treasurer.** Michael joined KRG Capital in 2006 as an Associate and was promoted to Vice President in 2007. Prior to joining the firm, Michael worked at Bain Capital, a Boston-based private equity firm where he worked on new investment opportunities, acquisitions, strategic initiatives, and strategy consulting. Michael received his MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business and graduated from Williams College with a BA in economics.

**Moira Cullen, The Capstone Group, Vice-President** As a partner at The Capstone Group, a public affairs firm, Moira advocates for education reform, higher education issues, non-profit advocacy, mental health and human services, and children's policy issues at the Colorado State Capitol. She also spent 4 years at the Colorado Children's Campaign as the Director of Public Affairs, where she lobbied on child health, early childhood education, and education reform legislation. Moira moved to Colorado after graduating from the University of Virginia. She earned her Master of Social Work at Colorado State University and worked with at-risk youth, leading to a decision to enter the government relations field in order to impact change at a statewide level.

**Judith Garcia, Southwest Parent Council Representative, Board Member** Judith Garcia has lived in Colorado for twelve years and is an active member of the southwest Denver community. She spends much of her time raising three wonderful young boys ages five, eight and eleven. Ensuring a quality education for her young boys is critically important to Judith. She serves on the Collaborative School Committee and the Parent Advisory Committee for Castro Elementary. Judith is also part of the Superintendent's parent forum and she recently joined the board of West Denver Prep where her eldest son attends school. Judith works at the Einstein Bagel store on the Auraria Campus where she enjoys interacting with students and staff. In her free time, Judith loves to walk at neighborhood parks and watch her kids play soccer.

**Chris Gibbons, West Denver Prep, ex officio** Chris is the lead founder and Chief Executive Officer at West Denver Prep. Chris is the former director of Denver Summerbridge, a non-profit education program providing college-preparatory academic support for middle school scholars from low-income public schools, and training for high school and college scholars to become educators. Beginning his teaching career at the Educator's Institute at City on a Hill Charter School in Boston, Chris initially served Summerbridge as an educator and dean for five years before becoming a director. Fluent in Spanish, Chris holds a B.S. in Biology from Yale University and a M.Ed. from Regis University. He has completed the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, a nationally-recognized training program for charter school founders designing uncompromising schools of excellence.

**Shelley Gomez, University of Colorado at Boulder, Board Member** Shelley has worked in Colorado higher education and educational access for more than a decade. As a first generation college student, Shelley sees the impact educational access and success have made on her life; she hopes to "pass it on" to current scholars by working with West Denver Prep. Shelley received a Bachelor's Degree from Colorado State University and is currently enrolled in a Master's Program at the University of Colorado at Denver.

**Chris Henderson, U.S. Department of the Interior, Board Member** Chris is a Denver native who attended both Denver and Cherry Creek Public Schools. Formerly a managing director at Vestar Capital Partners, Chris was appointed the Chief Operating Officer for the City of Denver. He is currently serving an appointment in Washington D.C. as the Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Economic Recovery under Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar. As the "Recovery Czar" for the Department of the Interior, Henderson will oversee the more than \$3 billion in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that Interior will be investing in projects in communities, parks, and public lands across the country. Chris holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Colorado and an MBA from Columbia University. He believes passionately in the success and importance of public education and brings this passion and his business knowledge to West Denver Prep.

**Kim Knous Dolan, Donnell-Kay Foundation, Secretary** Kim is the Associate Director for the Donnell-Kay Foundation in Denver. In 2006 she helped lead the Manual High School renewal and support initiative as a loaned executive to the Denver Public Schools (DPS) District. Prior to joining the Foundation, Kim worked on state policy issues for Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) as well as the Colorado Association of School Boards. She also served as legislative aide to U.S. Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), and was Associate Director of the Democratic Steering Committee. Kim actively fundraises for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, serves on the Board of West Denver Prep, and was selected as one of Colorado's "fifty for the future" by the Colorado Statesman in 2007. Kim holds a master's degree in public affairs from the University of Colorado at Denver.

**Jerry Lasso, Denver Public Schools, Board Member** A lifelong educator, Jerry was raised in a low-income section of West Los Angeles and committed his life to improving the quality of education in such urban schools. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Cal State Northridge, a Master's degree from the University of Colorado at Denver, and served in the United States Air Force. Jerry currently works for Denver Public Schools as a professional developer after recently retiring from the Jefferson County School District.

**Myles Mendoza, Education Reform Now, Board Member** Myles is the National Strategy Director of Education Reform Now, a national education policy and advocacy non-profit organization fighting to dramatically improve the quality of public education for America's most disadvantaged children. He was most recently the Development Director at the Denver Scholarship Foundation (DSF) and came to his non-profit executive career after years of front-line work in inner-city school environments including East St. Louis and Chicago neighborhoods.

**Alexander Ooms, ClearCreek Partners, Board Member**

Alex has been involved in education reform and charter schools since 1997, when he visited the Academy of the Pacific Rim, a high-performing urban charter school in Boston, to visit a close friend who was then the principal. Since then, he has been a strong proponent of educational reform, and has both advised and served as a board member of several charter schools. He is managing partner at ClearCreek Partners, and also serves as a member of the board of directors for the Colorado Charter Schools Institute, the Charter Schools Development Corporation, and the Colorado chapter of Stand for Children. Alex holds a B.A from Vassar College, an M.A. from Georgetown University and a MBA from the Kellogg School at Northwestern University.

**Maria Sierra, Northwest Parent Council Representative, Board Member** I grew up in northwest Denver and attended Catholic schools my whole life. After high school graduation, I became a mother. I worked hard as a single mother. I learned about what it takes to succeed with the help of my community. I lived in a transitional housing program for single parents and soon began working for the program. I have been working in low-income housing for about 17 years. I think now that through the struggles I witnessed both in my family and my community, I have been given me a unique perspective on others with the same struggle.

**Keith Trammell, Hogan Lovells, Board Member** A partner at Hogan Lovells, Keith concentrates in the areas of securities and corporate law, as well as international transactions. Keith's practice involves a full range of corporate transactions. He represents buyers and sellers, both private and public, in acquisitions, mergers, reorganizations, and sales of stock and assets. Keith also represents clients in connection with public and private securities offerings, as well as entrepreneurs in the formation of various businesses. He has experience assisting public companies with respect to corporate governance and compliance matters, as well as experience representing companies with respect to business process outsourcing and managed service agreements.

**Chris Watney, Colorado Children's Campaign, President** Chris Watney was named President of the Colorado Children's Campaign, a statewide public policy and advocacy organization, in 2009. Prior to that, she served as Executive Vice President of the organization, working to increase access to health care for uninsured children, expand quality early childhood education for our youngest children and as a passionate advocate for education reform. Prior to joining the Children's Campaign, Chris served as a spokesperson for U.S. Attorneys General Janet Reno and John Ashcroft while at the U.S. Department of Justice. She is the Chair of the Board of West Denver Prep and was named one of Colorado's 50 Movers and Shakers by the Colorado Statesman.

The West Denver Prep Board structure is specifically designed to ensure that the school is an educational and operational success. By attracting members of specific skill sets and areas of expertise, the Board ensures that they have fast access to the resources needed to support the school. By adopting a clear accountability plan for the school's academic program, the Board guarantees a simple, focused, and clear evaluation that is directly aligned to the DPS Performance Framework. Strong financial and facility knowledge ensures support in the areas that most commonly limit charter school operations.

The most significant structural element to ensure that constituencies are properly represented is the Parent Councils. By having independent Parent Councils at each campus, the school can respond more

specifically to needs at each location and parents will have direct access to the building Principals who are most able to address their concerns. The Parent Council Members who are full board members will provide this critical voice in the full Board meetings, and other parents will be encouraged to often attend Board meetings, which are always public in accordance with Colorado Sunshine Law.

**Board Creation and Transition.** The Board has undergone a significant training and development phase to assume the responsibility of multiple campuses. This has included a board retreat focused on growth and strategic planning facilitated by a partner at the Charter School Growth Fund and an ongoing strategic planning process to learn of best practices for broader governance from national charter management organizations and refine our local governance practices.

**Procedures.** The governance task force of the West Denver Prep Board is responsible for identifying prospective new members. Task force members develop a matrix of needed skills and expertise, speak with existing members for referrals, and generate a list of candidates. Candidates visit the school for a tour and meet with the CEO and CFO. Candidates meet a group of board members, including officers and governance committee members, for a question and answer session specifically related to their experience of the school and their areas of expertise. Board members are proposed for discussion at a board meeting, and then their status is an action item for vote at the following meeting.

- The West Denver Prep Board meets monthly, 11 times a year. 10 meetings are on Wednesday evenings and an annual retreat meeting is a full day in June.
- The board intends to have three standing task forces; Governance, Development, and Finance. Other areas of work are accomplished by individual or group task forces specific to the areas of expertise.
- All West Denver Prep board meetings are public. Meetings are noticed on the school website. Minutes are taken, approved monthly, and available to all constituents. The individual Parent Councils of the two campuses satisfy the composition and intent of C.R.S. 22-7-106.

**Board Expansion, Development, Succession.** After completing the process described above, approved new members receive a training manual and have an additional meeting with the governance committee chair and CEO to understand current board business and orient to board culture. All new members are added annually, in June, and their first meeting is the annual board retreat. All new members are expected to attend the retreat.

**Advisory Bodies.** The Parent Councils for West Denver Prep have been described above, but for clarity a brief summary follows:

Each campus will have its own Parent Council. The composition will match expectations of C.R.S. 22-7-206:

- Building Principal
- One elected educator representative
- Two appointed community members
- Three elected parent representatives

The Parent Council will meet monthly and will actively encourage participation beyond the elected members. The Parent Council will advise the Building Principal, handle concerns raised by parents, oversee parent volunteer efforts, plan special events, and support the school staff in meeting specific parent needs.

**Grievance Process.** Any individual or group (composed of parents, scholars, or employees of the school) may bring complaints to the Board of Trustees of West Denver Prep. Complaints will be submitted to the Board of Trustees at least one week prior to the next Board meeting. Complaints submitted later



will be addressed at the subsequent meeting of the Board of Trustees. Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis, with the Board responded at or prior to its next regular public meeting. Every effort will be made to respectfully address each matter to the satisfaction of the individual or group that presented the complaint. The Board, as necessary, may direct the CEO or other responsible party to act upon the complaint and report back to the Board. The Board of Trustees shall render a determination in writing if appropriate or required.

In addition to this formal grievance policy, there is a second on the board agenda reserved for public comment, so a constituent or a group can bring an issue for discussion without filing a formal grievance.

Families receive a copy of the Student & Family Handbook during their home visit in the spring and review this handbook, with all pertinent policies and procedures, with an administrator. All formal documents, corporate and otherwise, are available to families free of charge upon request.

**School Management Contracts.** West Denver Preparatory Charter School does not intend to contract with any Education Service Organizations.

### **C. Board Member Engagement**

Each spring, the board engages in a needs assessment based on the successes and challenges of the previous year. Based on this assessment and based on any board members who may be departing, the board searches for new members. Mission compatibility, capacity for engagement, and positive team dynamics are criteria for all members. Members are appointed by vote of the board.

While there is not a formal attendance requirement, the board chair monitors board member commitment, and failure to attend more than three meetings annually may result in concern. Board members are generally expected to participate in one task force each year.

Board member accountability is generally the responsibility of the executive committee. The board chair regularly works with individual board members to ensure a high degree of communication and participation. Board member expectations are described in the board job description (Appendix F). Significant neglect of responsibilities, evidence of poor mission compatibility, or violation of a school policy might trigger a conversation about removal. The process outlined in the bylaws would be followed.

### **D. School Oversight**

The board receives academic, student, and financial reports monthly. The school dashboard includes enrollment, attendance, discipline, persistence, performance assessment, and grade information as well as reports on specific student or personnel situations. The board considers all of this information with the CEO and together make plans for corrective action where necessary.

West Denver Prep is a mission-driven organization in all regards. Key decisions at the board level are regularly referenced against the mission of the school and dialogue about priorities nearly always centers around the mission.

The CEO is responsible for the evaluation of the School Director. The evaluation tool (Appendix H) is the standard school leader evaluation tool at West Denver Prep, adapted directly from the school's accountability plan. Academic achievement of students currently represents 80% of this evaluation. The board reviews Principal evaluations twice annually.

All West Denver Prep employees are at-will. Leadership hiring decisions are the responsibility of the CEO, though the board would be involved in a performance review at the leadership level. Consistent failure to meet accountability plan measures may trigger such a review.

The board will implement the grievance process and policy faithfully as described elsewhere in this application. The board's goals are to reasonably hear each concern and use potential conflict as a growth opportunity for the school community.

Provided a reasonable future PPOR level, the financial goal for each West Denver Prep school is to reach sustainability on public dollars by the year the school reaches full capacity.

#### **E. Board Status and Compliance**

West Denver Prep governs its network of schools with a single governing board supported by site-specific Parent Councils. This governing board, already operating for the existing schools, is an incorporated non-profit organization in the state of Colorado with Federal tax-exempt, 501(c)3 status. The bylaws of the organization (Appendix P) and the conflict of interest policy (Appendix Q) are attached to this application. West Denver Prep is a non-member corporation.

#### **F. Budget and Policy Narrative**

The five-year budget projection included for West Denver Prep's SMART Northwest campus is based primarily on revenue and expenditure trends over six years at the existing network schools in addition to assumptions provided by the Denver Public Schools (DPS) District and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Notes are included below for all budget line-items that are not self-explanatory in nature.

##### **Budget Form, General Notes:**

- All school directors at West Denver Prep campuses complete one year dedicated to training and planning at an existing school in order to develop systems and processes based on the demonstrated success of the first campus.
- The student body will grow incrementally beginning with 140 students in the first year of operations and adding students each year until the high school reaches a capacity of 500 students in grades 9-12. This model is a demonstrated best-practice among high-performing charter schools and has proven successful at existing West Denver Prep campuses. A larger administration (proportional to student growth) will support the school in the first year of operations in order to build an effective school culture and strong academic program).
- Following the model of the middle schools, 7 teachers will be hired for the first 9<sup>th</sup> grade class and the staff will grow each year as new grades are added to the school such that the student-teacher ratio does not exceed 16-17:1.
- Salaries for full-time teachers are projected based upon the tiered system described in the Leadership & Staffing section of the application.
- Salaries for administrative staff will be competitive with market rates based on skills and experience.
- Additional stipends will be paid to teachers appointed to leadership positions.
- West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will contract with DPS Food Services for breakfast and lunch service and anticipates that DPS will assign necessary kitchen staff to support food service as has been the precedent at all other campuses.
- Textbook and library expenditures are budgeted equivalent to expected Mill Levy funding that is allocated specifically for textbooks and library expenses.

**Anticipated Funding Sources.** West Denver Prep SMART Northwest expects to receive Per Pupil Operating Revenue (PPOR) beginning in July 2013 as a primary source of public funding to support general school operations. For budgeting purposes, projected enrollment is assumed as the school’s funded pupil count and consideration for state budget decisions and local pupil counts have driven our base per pupil funding assumptions. As such, we are projecting a 1.2% decrease in PPOR from 2011-12 to 2012-13 and then believe that PPOR will remain flat at approximately \$6,949 per student for the following four years. This assumption takes into account local base funding plus an “at-risk” factor determined by free and reduced lunch projections comparable to the demographics of our existing Northwest middle schools. Of the total PPOR allocation at SMART Northwest, approximately 14% is expected to be withheld by DPS for Administrative Overhead, Special Service fees, and the mandatory TABOR reserve. The remaining 86% of funds will be available for SMART Northwest’s general operating expenses.

In addition to PPOR, SMART Northwest expects to qualify for the highest level of Title I funding, with well over 75% of students in our current middle schools qualifying for Federal free or reduced lunch, at a rate of at least \$550 per student. Title II and III funding will also support instructional programs in the amounts of \$52 per student and \$160 per student, respectively. While SMART Northwest builds its student body over the first four years, operating expenses are expected to exceed revenues as the school grows incrementally while operating with a larger administrative staff to solidify the structure and culture that are integral to the success of the first campus. Contributions of \$250,000 annually are anticipated from the Gates Family Foundation to support this additional need above public funding allocations during the build-out of the campus.

If PPOR revenues remain constant throughout the five years of the budget period, private fundraising will be necessary to implement the entire program as designed in this application. Based on a strong track record of privately fundraising over four million dollars during the first years of the original school’s history, West Denver Prep is confident in its capacity for securing additional private funds again.

The following table lists gifts secured and requested for the growth of the network over the next three years:

Organization	3-year Commitment	Organization	3-year Commitment
Daniels Fund	\$2.25M	Anschutz Foundation	\$750K
Charter School Growth Fund	\$2.25M	Piton Foundation	\$300K
The Walton Foundation	\$1.0M	Gates Family Foundation	\$150K
Gates Family Foundation	\$750K	Carson Foundation	\$150K
Walton Family Foundation	\$750K	Foundation for Great Schools	\$50K

Still, in order to prepare for all possible scenarios, the budget provided includes a more comprehensive contingency tab that details which expenses the school would eliminate if it were critical to operate its program on PPOR revenues alone. In addition to eliminating staff raises and performance bonuses, student trips and transportation are areas that would also be considered. If these circumstances were

to arise, the Board of Trustees, in conjunction with the CEO and CFO, would conduct a detailed analysis of the programmatic impact of these eliminations before implementing changes.

**Audits.** The Board of Trustees will bear responsibility for the financial oversight of the school. As such, the Board will select a Treasurer with professional experience in finance or accounting, and will organize and regularly convene a standing finance committee. The CEO and CFO will issue monthly financial reports to the board. The school will use an industry-standard accounting software program to maintain financial records, and will do so in accordance with GSAB #34. The school has an approved Financial Policies & Procedures Manual.

The school will hire an experienced, independent auditing firm to conduct a financial audit annually, following the conclusion of each fiscal year on June 30. The CEO, CFO, and Board of Trustees will consider and implement any significant findings by the auditor about West Denver Prep’s fiscal and general management practices. The audit report will be submitted to Denver Public Schools in a timely fashion and will be included in the school’s annual report, as appropriate.

West Denver Prep SMART Northwest will benefit from centralized group purchasing rates for contracted services managed by the WDP Network Office. Each West Denver Prep campus contributes 8% of PPOR in CMO fees to the West Denver Prep Network Office to cover these contracted expenses. All services have been selected through a competitive bid process with consideration for each provider’s alignment with West Denver Prep needs and priorities:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Approximate Annual Rate</b>
Audit	Swanhorst & Company	Conducts independent audit of financial records and audit report	\$2,500/school
Payroll Services	Qqest Payroll Services	Processing of all employee payments, tax withholdings, and payroll tax reports.	\$36/employee
IT Support	ISC	Provide IT networking and infrastructure implementation and support	\$20/student
Business Services	*West Denver Prep	*West Denver Prep’s Network Office provides all other business services for each campus including accounting, budgeting, & human resources	\$480/student

## Section VI: WAIVERS

West Denver Prep SMART requests all automatic district and state waivers as provided in Appendix A and B of the application materials.

In addition, West Denver Prep SMART requests a waiver from policies IKE and IKE-R: Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of students. Even with a rigorous college preparatory middle school model, we still realize that  $\leq 20\%$  of our scholars will not perform at the grade level content area thresholds in their first year. As such, a consistent and rigorous policy of promotion standards is critical to ensuring strong academic achievement and preventing scholars from being passed forward even further behind standards. Furthermore, by the design of our challenging and relevant liberal arts college prep program, we do not anticipate that our scholars will require academic remediation as a condition of admission into a four-year college or university. Our alternative promotion policy is included on page 50 of this application.

No other waivers are requested at this time.