

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

***Community Public Charter School
Albemarle County Public Schools***

Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (□ 22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to August 1 of the school year in which the plan is to be implemented.

8 VAC 20-131-280 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states (in part): *Special purpose schools such as regional, special education, alternative, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50.*

The Board of Education, in its *Guidelines Governing the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, states:

Schools described in this section are those that serve as a student's school of principal enrollment and where students are reported in fall membership for the school. Fall membership determines whether or not these schools are subject to the provisions of the accrediting standards; therefore, schools reporting fall membership are subject to the provisions of the standards. These schools may or may not administer Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.

In accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330 of the standards, local school boards may seek waivers of provisions of the standards to address the unique needs of these special purpose schools. Such requests may include an alternative accreditation plan. Applications must be submitted to the Board for consideration at least ninety days prior to August 1 of the school year. Requests for consideration must be accompanied by information that documents the need for approval of the request.

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

Date Approved
by the Local School Board

Signature
Chairman of the School Board

Submission Date

Signature
Division Superintendent

School Name: Community Public Charter School **Division:** Albemarle County

School Address: 901 Rose Hill Drive. Charlottesville Virginia, 22903

Contact Person: Ashby Kindler or Don Vale **Phone:** 434 972-1607

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Proposed Duration of the Plan: Three Years

Grade Levels Served: 6-8

No. of Students Enrolled by Grade Level:

6th Grade – 13 Students 7th Grade – 6 Students 8th Grade – 17 Students

I. Describe the mission and purpose of the school.

The mission of The Community Public Charter School is to provide an alternative and innovative learning environment, using the arts, to help children in grades six through eight learn in ways that match their learning styles and develop the whole child intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. Seeking to serve students who have not succeeded in school, the program will close their achievement gap by offering a balance of literacy tutorials and the arts-infused curriculum.

Goals:

- Expand opportunities for students who have not been successful in school, using the arts as a means of increasing literacy skills, and as a means of expression, discovery, invention and reflection;
- Create an intimate educational setting designed to engage and empower each student to think critically, creatively and reflectively;
- Provide opportunities for students to achieve in literary, performing, and visual arts;
- Help students learn self-responsibility, self-discipline, self-direction and self-nurturing;
- Create possibilities where all students are an important part of something larger than themselves: family, school, community, and world.
- Design extensive process-oriented activities that result in a balance of process and product;
- Integrate educational experiences within the community and solicit active involvement from parents and others;
- Provide quality instruction by engaging and retaining a team of dedicated teachers and professional artists;
- Give students the skills to pursue their own goals and evaluate their own performance;
- Encourage family involvement as a contributor to success; and,
- Teach students to think like artists

II. Describe the Characteristics of the Student Population Served by the School. Include demographic information that identifies the subgroups attending the school, the criteria used to determine the students' placement in this school, and the policies governing parental involvement in determining the placement.

Community Public Charter School serves students in grades 6-8 who are behind grade level in mathematics and /or reading, who are not performing up to their potential in traditional schools and who may benefit from a smaller environment with an arts-infused focus. All Albemarle County Public School students entering grades 6-8 are eligible to apply for enrollment. Our target population includes students who are one or more years below grade level, or who have not experienced optimum success in school. Students are identified by their teachers, counselors, administrators or parents and with their parent/guardian support, apply for admission to CPCS. We accept, but do not specifically target, students who are identified as needing special education services. If there are more applicants than spaces, students will be selected by lottery. Current enrollment demographics provide for a fully diverse school with percentages within the range of demographics found in other Albemarle County Public Middle Schools.

III. Describe the instructional program and support services offered by the school. Include a profile of the teaching staff and its qualifications, characteristics of the program that makes it a special purpose school, any differentiated instructional methodologies used, and transition plans for the students.

Community Public Charter School teaches the core subjects of language arts, social studies, math, and science with an arts infused and technology focus. The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a comprehensive curriculum that is customized through an arts and technology focus to support the mission of the school. All students have access to the full range of courses offered in Albemarle County Public Middle Schools.

With Choice Theory as our philosophical base, we strive to help students gain more responsibility in their socio-emotional lives as well as in their academics. We offer much choice in learning activities, instructional strategies and place a high value on student/teacher and student/student relationships. Choice Theory and William Glasser's Quality Schools movement guide the ways in which we interact with students. When students are disruptive or unable to attend to the behavioral or work expectations in a class, we use Choice Theory practices to help them identify root causes and make a plan for their return to class rather than simply assigning more traditional disciplinary consequences. This may take the form of a short individual conference with the classroom teacher or a more formal process with the administration to create a written plan of action.

Reading intervention is core to students' curriculum with an integration of several reading programs: "istation", Read 180, and Wilson Reading. These three programs are researched based reading programs showing excellent potential for rapid growth. Assessments measure growth frequently and provide immediate feedback to both students and the teachers identifying strengths and weaknesses. Focus areas and lesson recommendations are provided based upon the results.

Istation supports reading for all students through the content areas of science and social studies. Content area teachers use this program to support literacy, comprehension, decoding and vocabulary. Assessments are at least monthly and provide specific information on overall reading, comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and text fluency based upon a tier growth model.

Read 180 is for student who are two years behind. Whole group and small group materials provided systematic instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary. Small group rotations provide individualized instruction through matched eBooks and computer based programs working on fluency, reading

comprehension and vocabulary through modeled and independent reading. This is taught by a reading specialist.

Wilson Reading is designed for those students who are significantly behind. Throughout the program, a ten step lesson plan, designed to be interactive between teacher and student, is followed assuring that all essential components of reading instruction are addressed in each lesson. A systematic and cumulative approach to teaching total word structure for decoding and encoding is a primary focus. Frequent criterion based assessments at each of the 12 levels provides feedback and direction for student growth. This is taught by a reading specialist/special education teacher.

Students participate in arts related activities on and off our campus including: blacksmithing, music lessons with professional musicians; visiting artists; community service.

Community Public Charter School is staffed with highly qualified teachers certified to teach all core areas. Currently, teacher/pupil ratio is 8-1 in core classes. We have a half-time art teacher. Paraprofessionals are utilized to serve as instructional assistants and resources for students. We have one full-time special education teacher. Additional pupil support is provided by two full-time counselors provided by local mental health agencies, by Albemarle County special education support, and by volunteers.

Our students will transition to either one of three comprehensive high schools, or to a smaller alternative charter high school in Albemarle County. All students are provided with guidance services and transition planning to optimize their transition to the high school level. Academic and socio-emotional growth are key components within our program design. Students will be fully prepared to enter the high school programs offered in Albemarle County Public Schools. Our goal is for our students to be placed in standard level or higher classes as opposed to self-contained or remedial classes.

IV. Describe the strategies and instruments used by the school to evaluate student progress toward established goals and objectives.

All students will participate in grade level SOL tests in all core areas. All requirements of NCLB will be met through the planned assessments and program offerings. Additionally, students will be assessed using MAP, “iStation” monthly assessments, CRI’s, Read 180 assessments, SOL released tests, school division common benchmark assessments, and authentic standards based assessments

V. Does the school meet the pre-accreditation eligibility requirements outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-280.F. of the accrediting standards? (If not, waivers must be requested for each accreditation standard not being met.)

Yes – because we are a school within a school, all students have access to the full offerings and required accreditation standards of any middle school student in Albemarle County.

VI. List each standard and provide a detailed explanation of why the standard is not appropriate for the school. (Note: Waivers of the assessment requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia are not available.)

The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a full comprehensive grade level curriculum that is customized to support the mission of the school. Assessment will be provided as required by NCLB

No waivers are being requested

VII. List the standards or student academic achievement criteria on which you propose to base the school’s accreditation and provide a detailed rationale for selecting each. The standards/criteria must be objective, measurable, and related directly to the mission and purpose of the school. Provide data to support your rationale.

The alternative accreditation index model will hold the Community Public Charter School accountable for increasing the achievement levels of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) in reading and mathematics and use science and history and social science and other indicators of school and student performance that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school as value-added components. The plan includes academic achievement measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school.

Student achievement is a fundamental component in determining the accreditation status of Virginia’s public schools. The alternative accreditation index model will measure student achievement based on students’ progress in moving from basic to proficient to advanced levels of performance on Standards of Learning assessments. The index will have a primary focus on reading and mathematics achievement. The index is based on a set of core achievement objectives and measures (SOL test scores and other indicators)

An alternative accreditation index score (0 to 100 points) will be calculated primarily based on the total number of students performing at each proficiency level in reading and mathematics.

SOL Index Points are assigned for student performance on the SOL tests by multiplying the number of student scores at each level by the points awarded, adding the total points earned, and dividing by the total number of student scores. Additional Index Points may be earned for meeting performance measures in the core “other academic” and optional objectives categories.

The Alternative Accreditation Index Score for each content area (English and Mathematics) is calculated by combining the SOL Index Score and the Additional Index Points.

An Alternative Accreditation Composite Index Score of at least 70 points must be earned in both English and mathematics grades 6-8 to achieve fully accredited status. Due to the small student population, a composite pass rate is necessary to create a larger number of student scores upon which to calculate state accreditation.

Basis for Accreditation:

Strategies used to evaluate student progress are aligned to the mission and purpose of our school and include academic achievement measures for all students

If the Community Public Charter school does not meet full accreditation based on the SOA, then for the purposes of calculating state **accreditation**, test results for all students in reading and mathematics will be included as follows:

- A scale score of 500-600 will be weighted at 110 points
- A scale score of 400-499 will be weighted at 100 points
- A scale score of 375-399 will be weighted at 60 points
- A scale score below 375 will carry no points in the calculation

Additionally the school will receive recognition in the calculation for core other academic indicators for improvement in the following categories measuring reading:

- iStation Reading Program Tier Growth*
- Read 180 Growth grade level equivalent from Lexile score*
- Wilson Reading program growth*
- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in reading
- CRI (composite reading index) growth

* Participating students in iStation, Read 180, and Wilson may only be counted once.

There are assessments used to track student growth in reading. Since every student is not enrolled in Wilson or Read 180, then each student will be tracked for accountability purposes with one of the assessments above. This will also address the various assessment needs of students with disabilities enrolled in the program. For example, one type of assessment may be more visual in nature than verbal, but all assess reading growth. Students may demonstrate growth in reading through these various assessments but may only be counted once toward earning points in this accreditation model.

For other areas:

- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in mathematics
- Recovering students pass rates in mathematics reading, history and social science
- 8th Grade Science SOL pass rate
- 8th Grade Civics SOL pass rate
- 8th Grade Writing SOL pass rate

MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) is a research based assessment program that is nationally normed and provides an RTI score as well as a growth goal target score. MAP assessments provide detailed, actionable data about where each child is on their unique learning path. It is information teachers can use in the classroom to help every child, every day. Understanding each student's academic level gives teachers the power to help them excel. MAP computerized adaptive assessments are the tools that make it possible to build curriculum and meet their students' needs, one child at a time.

RIT stands for Rasch unIT, which is a unit of measure that uses individual item difficulty values to estimate student achievement. RIT scores create an equal-interval scale. This score is independent of the age or grade of the student, and reflects the instructional level at which the student is currently performing.

Growth is defined as the change in a student's score and improvement in achievement over time. Individual growth targets are defined as the average amount of RIT growth observed for students who started the year with the same RIT score as the individual student.

The spring assessment in both reading and math will provide evidence of the number of students who are able to meet or exceed their growth goal. No students will be double counted which means points in reading or math can only be earned once in this accreditation model when looking at the multiple measures and assessments.

Social studies and science were given less focus on assessment and accreditation since reading and mathematics are the target focus areas in our school.

Recovery pass rates for Albemarle County 2010:

Division Name	Reading: All Students	Reading: Black	Reading: Hispanic	Reading: White	Reading: Limited English Proficient	Reading: Economically Disadvantaged	Reading: Students with Disabilities	Math: All Students	Math: Black	Math: Hispanic	Math: White	Math: Limited English Proficient	Math: Economically Disadvantaged	Math: Students with Disabilities
Albemarle County	55.36	52	42.86	57.14	59.09	47.5	40.43	62.44	56.9	72.22	63.33	71.43	53.26	54.72

SOL Scaled Score	SOL Proficiency Level	Points Awarded Each SOL Score
500 - 600	Pass Advanced	110
400 - 499	Pass Proficient	100
375 - 399	Fail Basic (Reading and Math 6-8)	60
Below 375	Fail	0

Core Other Academic Objectives No double counting of students	
iStation Reading Program Tier Growth Grades 6-8 Current Fall 2010: Tier 3 students (13 students) 6 th - 25%, (3 students) 7 th - 29%, (2 students) 8 th - 47% (8 students)	Tier 3 movement to Tier 2 1 point Tier 2 movement to Tier 1 2 points Tier 3 movement to Tier 1 3 points Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives No double counting of students	
Read 180 Growth grade level equivalent from Lexile score. Current Fall 2010 6 students participating – grade level equivalent range 1-4	Growth of 1 year 1 point Growth of 1.5 years 2 points Growth of 2 or more years 3 points Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives No double counting of students	
Wilson Reading program growth Current Fall 2010 4 students participating	Growth of 1 year 1 point Growth of 1.5 years 2 points Growth of 2 or more years 3 points Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives No double counting of students	
MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) growth in Reading and Mathematics administered 3 times/yr Current Fall 2010 Reading 19 of 29 below benchmark 65.5%) Math 25 of 36 below benchmark (69.4%)	Each student who meets or exceeds their RTI growth goal will earn: 1 point.

Core Other Academic Objectives No double counting of students		
CRI (composite reading index) growth Current Fall 2010 13 of 17 below grade level (76.4%)	Growth of 1 year	1 point
	Growth of 1.5 years	2 points
	Growth of 2 or more years	3 points
	Each student counts for 1, 2, or 3 points	
Optional Objectives		
Recovering students pass rates in mathematics reading Current number of students in recovery Math 11 of 36 30.5% Reading 13 of 36 36.1%	70% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	2 point
	80% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	3 points
	90% pass rate (recovery) Math, Reading	4 points
	Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)	
8th Grade Science SOL pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)		
8th Grade Civics SOL pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points
Core Other Academic Objectives (3 points maximum)		
8th Grade Writing SOL pass rate	70% pass rate	1 point
	80% pass rate	2 points
	90% pass rate	3 points

VIII. Describe who was involved in the development of the proposed plan.

This plan was developed by John “Billy” Haun, Asst. Superintendent of Albemarle County; Ashby Kindler, Principal CPCS; Don Vale, School Improvement Coordinator CPCS and was approved by the staff and School Management Team of CPCS

IX. Describe the method(s) to be used in evaluating the success of the plan.

Community Public Charter School targets students who have not felt successful in other public schools. As a result, many of our students are below grade level in reading, have never passed an SOL test or have had significant failure in school. For this reason, our plan includes multiple measures of student growth in addition to the SOL targets. Student success is viewed in terms of gains made as well as achieving objective targets.