PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

Cyber Charter School Application for Pennwood Cyber Charter School

Binder #1: Application Narrative and Appendix A.1 and A.2.a

Submission Date: October 3, 2022

Submitted By: Marc LeBlond

258 Brentwood Drive, Cogan Station, PA 17728

Phone: 272-236-9694

Email: marc.leblond@trincoll.edu

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

Cyber Charter School Application for Pennwood Cyber Charter School

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

Compliance Matrices

Section 1719-A:	Location in Application
The identification of the cyber charter applicant.	Fact Sheet
The name of the proposed cyber charter school.	Fact Sheet Section III.2
The grade or age levels served by the cyber charter school.	Fact Sheet
The proposed governance structure of the cyber charter school, including a description and method for the appointment or election of the board of trustees.	Section III Appendix L
The mission and (measurable) education goals of the cyber charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals. Cyber charter school students shall be required to meet the same testing and academic performance standards established by law and regulations applicable to public school students.	Response I.1 Response I.2 Response I.3
The admission policy and criteria for evaluating student admission which shall comply with the requirements of section 1723-A (of the Charter School Law).	Response I.4.F Appendix S
Procedures which will be used regarding the suspension or expulsion of pupils.	Response V.4.B Appendix S Appendix V
Information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the cyber charter school planning process.	Response I.5
The financial plan for the cyber charter school and the provisions which will be made for auditing the school under section 437 (of the Public School Code).	Response IV.1 Appendix P
Procedures which shall be established to review complaints of parents regarding the operation of the cyber charter school.	Response I.5.C
A description of and address of the physical facility in which the cyber charter school will be located and the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements.	Fact Sheet Response IV.2 Appendix R
Information on the proposed school calendar for the cyber charter school, including the length of the school day and school year consistent with provisions of section 1502.	Fact Sheet Response I.3.D
The proposed faculty and a professional development plan for the faculty of a cyber charter school.	Response V.3.E Response V.3.C Appendix U
Whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the cyber charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, no school district of residence shall prohibit a student of a cyber charter school from participating in any extracurricular activity of that school district of residence: provided, that the student is able to fulfill all of the requirements of participation in such activity and the cyber charter school does not provide the same extracurricular activity.	Response II.3 Response I.6.B
A report of criminal history record, pursuant to section 111, for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.	Response V.3.F
An official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 Subch. C.2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.	Response V.3.G
How the cyber charter school will provide adequate liability and other appropriate insurances for the cyber charter school, its employees and its board of trustees.	Response IV.3 Appendix E

Section 1747-A:	Location in Application
1. The curriculum to be offered and how it meets the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Ch.4 (relating to academic standards and assessment) or subsequent regulations promulgated to replace 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4.	Response I.3 Appendix A
2. The number of courses required for elementary and secondary students.	Response I.3
3. An explanation of the amount of online time required for elementary and secondary students.	Response I.7
4. The manner in which teachers will deliver instruction, assess academic progress and communicate with students to provide assistance.	Response I.7
5. A specific explanation of any cooperative learning opportunities, meetings with students, parents and guardians, field trips or study sessions.	Response I.3
6. The technology, including types of hardware and software, equipment and other materials which will be provided by the cyber charter school to the student.	Response I.7.F
7. A description of how the cyber charter school will define and monitor a student's school day, including the delineation of on-line and off-line time.	Response I.3. Response I.4
8. A description of commercially prepared standardized achievement tests that will be used by the cyber charter school in addition to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment test, including the grade levels that will be tested and how the data collected from the tests will be used to improve instruction.	Response I.4.G
9. The technical support that will be available to students and parents or guardians.	Response I.7.C
10. The privacy and security measures to ensure the confidentiality of data gathered online.	Response I.7.D Response I.4.E
11. The level of anticipated enrollment during each school year of the proposed cyber charter school including expected increases due to the addition of grade levels.	Responses II.2, Question 1
12. The methods to be used to ensure the authenticity of student work and adequate proctoring of examinations.	Response I.7.E
13. The provision of education and related services to students with disabilities, including evaluation and the development and revision of individualized education programs.	Response I.3.B Response IV.2.B Response V.4.B Appendix C
14. Policies regarding truancy, absences and withdrawal of students, including the manner in which the cyber charter school will monitor attendance consistent with the provisions of section 1715-A (9).	Response IV.4.C Appendix S
15. The types and frequency of communication between the cyber charter school and the students and the manner in which the cyber charter school will communicate with parents and guardians.	Response I.4.A Response I.5 Response I.7
16. The addresses of all facilities and offices of the cyber charter school, the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements. If the cyber charter school has more than one facility, it must designate the administrative office where all student records shall be maintained as required by section 1748-A(h).	Response IV.2 Appendix R

Section 1743-A(c)(d)		Location in Application
1.	Describe how your cyber charter school will make available upon request, either in writing or electronically, the following information to each student's school district of residence:	Response I.4.F
	a. A copy of the charter.	Response I.4.F
	b. A copy of the cyber charter school application.	Response I.4.F
	c. A copy of all annual reports prepared by the cyber charter school.	Response I.4.F
	d. A list of all students from that school district enrolled in the cyber charter school.	Response I.4.F
2.	Describe how the cyber charter school upon request and prior to the student's first day in the cyber charter school will provide, either in writing or electronically, the following information to the parent or guardian of a student:	Response I.4.F
	a. A list and brief description of the courses of instruction the student will receive. The list shall be updated annually for each grade level in which the student is enrolled.	Response I.4.F
	b. A description of the lessons and activities to be offered online and offline.	Response I.4.F
	c. The manner in which attendance will be reported and work will be authenticated.	Response I.4.F
	d. A list of all standardized tests the student will be required to take during the school year and the place where the test will be administered, if available.	Response I.4.F
	e. The meetings to be held during the school year between a parent or guardian and a teacher and among other school officials or parents or guardians and the manner in which the parent or guardian will be notified of the time and place for the meeting.	Response I.4.F
	f. The address of the cyber charter school and the name, telephone number and e-mail address of the school administrator and other school personnel.	Response I.4.F
	g. A list of any extracurricular activities provided by the cyber charter school.	Response I.4.F
	h. The names of the student's teachers, if available, and the manner in which each teacher can be contacted by the student or the parent of guardian.	Response I.4.F
	i. A list of all services that will be provided to the student by the cyber charter school.	Response I.4.F
	j. Copies of policies relating to computer security and privacy, truancy, absences, discipline and withdrawal or expulsion of students.	Response I.4.F
	k. Information on:	Response I.4.F
	i. The cyber charter school's professional staff, including the number of staff personnel, their education level and experience.	Response I.4.F
	ii. The cyber charter school's performance on the PSSA and other standardized test scores.	Response I.4.F
	l. Information regarding the proper usage of equipment and materials and the process for returning equipment and materials supplied to the students by the cyber charter school. A parent or guardian shall acknowledge, either in writing or electronically, the receipt of this information.	Response I.4.F
	m. A description of the school calendar, including, but not limited to, the time frame that will constitute a school year and a school week, holiday and term breaks.	Response I.4.F

Section 1748-A	Location in Application
• Within 15 days of the enrollment of a student to a cyber charter school, the parent or guardian and the cyber charter school shall notify the student's school district of residence of the enrollment through the use of the notification form developed by the Department of Education.	Response I.4.F
• The cyber charter school and the parent or guardian shall provide written notification to the school district of residence within 15 days following the withdrawal of a student from the cyber charter school.	Response I.4.F

Section 1745-A. (f) Evaluation Criteria.[1]	
(1) A cyber charter school application submitted under this subdivision shall be evaluated by the department based on the following criteria:	
(i) The demonstrated, sustainable support for the cyber charter school plan by teachers, parents or guardians and students.	Acknowledged and Addressed
(ii) The capability of the cyber charter school applicant, in terms of support and planning, to provide comprehensive learning experiences to students under the charter.	Acknowledged and Addressed
(iii) The extent to which the programs outlined in the application will enable students to meet the academic standards under 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment) or subsequent regulations promulgated to replace 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4.	Acknowledged and Addressed
(iv) The extent to which the application meets the requirements of section 1747-A.	Acknowledged and Addressed
(v) The extent to which the cyber charter school may serve as a model for other public schools.	Acknowledged and Addressed

---

[1]

http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/uconsCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&yr=1949&sessInd=0&smthLwInd=0&act=14&chpt=17A&sctn=45&subsctn=0

CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FACT SHEET

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

Proposed Charter School Name (Must Include "Charter School" in the Title):

Pennwood Cyber Charter School

Proposed Charter School Location

Address: 555 Ryan Run Road

City/Town: York   Zip Code: 17404

County: York

Intermediate Unit: Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12

Proposed Start Date: August 14, 2023

Federal Employer Identification Number: 92-0269283

Contact Person:

First: Marc   Middle: Last: LeBlond

Organization: Pennwood Cyber Charter School

City: Cogan Station   State: PA   Zip Code: 17728

Telephone: (272) 236-9694   Fax Number: N/A

E-mail: marc.leblond@trincoll.edu

Indicate Number of Representatives per Group

Founding Coalition

Group	Number of Representatives
Parents	89
Teachers	12
Business Partners	
Community Based Organizations	3
Museums	
Higher Education	
Other Group - Identify:	8 State Representatives

Grade and Age Ranges

Group	Grade/Age Range
Elementary	Kindergarten – 5th Grade
Secondary	6th Grade – 12th Grade
Age of Kindergarten	Dependent upon local district requirements
Age of Beginners	5 years, 7 months by September 1 pursuant to 24 P.S. § 13-1304
Grades Educated	☒ K ☒ 1 ☒ 2 ☒ 3 ☒ 4 ☒ 5 ☒ 6 ☒ 7 ☒ 8 ☒ 9 ☒ 10 ☒ 11 ☒ 12
Kindergarten	● Full Day ○ Half Day

Projected Student Enrollment Year 1-5

Year	Enrollment
1st Year	1,800
2nd Year	3,000
3rd Year	4,500
4th Year	6,200
5th Year	8,200
Total Number of Teachers	84 in 1st year; 392 in 5th year

Does the cyber charter applicant have an existing retirement system?

● Yes ○ No

Pennwood's Board will submit to PSERS for adoption and approval a 403(b) plan immediately following the approval of the charter. The 403(b) plan will include a minimum employee contribution of 5% and an employer match of 5%. Employees will be eligible to contribute an additional percentage of their salary if they choose. Enclosed with this application is a sample plan from PenServ Plan Services in Appendix X.

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

● Yes ○ No

The proposed facility is 555 Ryan Run Road, York, PA 17404. The property owner and Pennwood's Board have entered into a letter of intent to lease the property. A copy of the letter of intent may be found at Appendix R. Pending charter authorization, please send communications to Pennwood's Board Counsel: Nicole Snyder, McKenna Snyder, LLC; 350 Eagleview Blvd, Ste 100; Exton, PA 19341.

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

School Focus

Mission, Educational Focus & Essential Characteristics

The mission of Pennwood Cyber Charter School (Pennwood) is to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and career skill development. Pennwood will be more than a cyber curricular solution; it will be a proven high-quality, comprehensive educational experience. Pennwood will serve eligible K-12 students throughout the state, including general education students, students with disabilities, at-risk students, students requiring acceleration and enrichment, and English Learners. Pennwood will give Pennsylvania families access to a cyber school option with the following:

Unique Career Readiness & Badging Focus. Pennwood will include a unique badging program to increase engagement, motivate students, provide career and life skills opportunities, and improve academic outcomes. These badges will consist of two areas: 1) Career Competency badges, focused on Career Education, and 2) Engagement Badges, focused on school culture and building responsible citizens. Career Competency badges will be earned through the three-week Connections Term while Engagement badges may be earned throughout the year.

Extended 3-Week Connections Term. Pennwood will require a three-week Connections Term ("C-Term") in addition to the 180 school days in March; this session will build a school culture focused on the importance of Career Education and Work Standards. Partnering with Drexel's Goodwin College, high school students who are on track for graduation will participate in project-based learning. Students in grades K-8 will participate in a career and college preparation course based on the four areas of knowledge identified in the Pennsylvania Career Education and Work Standards. All students will also participate in test preparation during the session. When necessary and for students not on track, students may focus on remediation and/or credit recovery during this term. These students will be eligible to participate in the Engagement badges during the year.

High-quality Curriculum. Pearson-provided curriculum and instruction meet standards at the state and national level while integrating the best materials, texts, and resources available. A partnership with Drexel's Goodwin College will provide students in grades 9-12 exposure to college curriculum.

Exceptional Teachers. Pennwood teachers will be experts in online learning. Though not required by state law, teachers will be PA certified and trained to excel in online teaching with enhanced training in career readiness and badging. Students will have opportunities to work 1:1 with teachers for personalized instruction through tutoring, personalized live lessons, and check-in phone calls.

Individualized Learning. Teachers identify individual students' interests and learning preferences, to encourage personal development, giving each student the best opportunity to succeed. The extended school year will be another opportunity to individualize and allow students to focus on key interests.

Easy-to-Use Technology – Laptops, printers, and Internet access will be provided for all students. Through the Pearson Online Classroom (the Education Management System [EMS] and learning platform), parents/guardians and students can access curriculum, review grades, and complete lessons.

Socialization and Community. LiveLesson®, a real-time, interactive web-conferencing tool, allows students to meet regularly in a virtual setting and gives classmates the opportunity to share ideas, compare experiences, and have fun learning together. Students can also participate in online clubs and activities, in-person gatherings, and field trips.

Comprehensive Support Services – The school will provide the following services: counseling, English Learner, remediation, test preparation, Credit Recovery courses, enrollment, outreach, and extensive teacher professional development.

I. SCHOOL DESIGN

I.1 Mission Statement

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

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

Mission

The mission of Pennwood Cyber Charter School (Pennwood) is to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and practical career skill development.

With the name Pennwood Cyber Charter School, the Board of Trustees (the Board), partnering with teachers, administrators, and community members will bring to the students of Pennsylvania an opportunity to control their own future. Similar to the sovereignty that was granted to William Penn when he was given Penn's Woods and the title of Admiral Penn, Pennwood students will be given an opportunity to grow and control their own opportunities—to reach their full potential.

The Pennwood Board is proud to have the opportunity to join the Pennsylvania education community, and we aim to promote Pennsylvania's core values.

Pennwood as a Model Innovative Public School

Pennwood is a public cyber charter school with a unique model that includes an extended school year and badging program to increase engagement, motivate students, and improve academic outcomes for students throughout the state of Pennsylvania. The school plans to collaborate with community partners such as Drexel University's Goodwin College, and its Education Service Provider (ESP), Pearson Virtual Schools (Pearson), to provide ties to the community, real-world applications, project-based learning, and career- and college-readiness. While virtual learning will be the delivery method to provide this unique learning opportunity and increase access statewide, virtual learning is the means for delivery, not the focus of the cyber charter school. The following graphic is a visual representation of the vision for the unique Pennwood model. This model incorporates an extended school year, known as the Connections Term (C-Term), in addition to a focus on individualization, community-centered principles, and relevancy through project-based learning and badging.
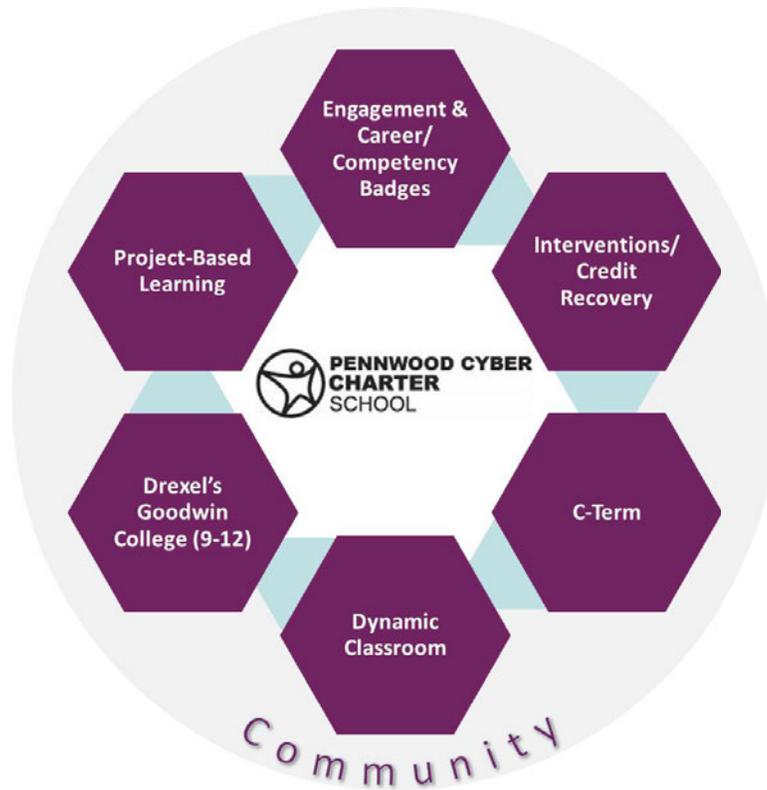
Figure 1. The vision for the unique Pennwood model

B. What is your overarching vision of the school?

Vision

The vision of Pennwood Cyber Charter School is to prepare students to become adaptable learners who have the academic, career-readiness, and life skills they need to enter a changing world with confidence.

I.2 Measurable Goals and Objectives

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

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

Measurable Academic Goals & Objectives

Pennwood's Board is aware that Pennwood's academic success will be measured by the indicators set forth in the Future Ready PA Index (https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/FutureReady/Pages/FRReviewofIndicators.aspx).

Cyber schools supported by Pearson serve the unique needs of a highly mobile student population. In 2021-2022, 39% of high school students had already attended 4 or more schools, 45% of middle school students had attended 3 or more schools, and 39% of elementary students had attended 2 or more

schools. The negative impact of mobility on student performance has been well documented.[2] However, state test performance of students at Pearson-supported schools has been found to be equivalent to their brick-and-mortar counterparts after adjusting for mobility.[3]

With this understanding in mind, and in order to be most successful, the Pennwood Board has developed the following aspirational academic goals to measure our progress:

Academic Goals

1. **Academic Proficiency:** Proficiency rates on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), Pennsylvania Alternative State Assessment (PASA) and the Keystone Exams for Pennwood will be 100% of the state average. The calculation is a ratio of the weighted school's result to the weighted state average for all tested subject-grade level. A value of 100% indicates the school is equivalent to the state average.

2. **Academic Growth:** The school will show an increase in the state test ratio calculated in the previous goal from the initial year of the charter period to the fifth year of the initial charter period so the ratio will be at least 100%.

3. **Graduation Rate:** 85% of students either entering 9th grade for the first time with Pennwood or being on-track to graduate with their four-year cohort at the time of enrollment in Pennwood's High School program, will graduate on time.

4. **Career Competency Badge**: 65% of students will earn at least one (1) Career Competency Badge in the first year of the school. This percentage will increase by 5% each year of the initial 5-year charter.

5. **Engagement Badge:** 80% of students will earn at least two (2) Engagement Badges each year.

B. What are the school's measurable non-academic goals and objectives to promote student performance?

Measurable Non-Academic Goals & Objectives

Mobility has also been found to have an adverse impact on student well-being and social and emotional learning skills. However, staff trained by Pearson know that it is often the reasons that students decide to move from their brick-and-mortar schools that is key to understanding how to help their students to be successful. In 2021-2022, for example, 30% of students moved for safety reasons, 23% were experiencing bullying in their previous school, and 29% experienced mental and or physical health issues.[4] With this deep understanding of the students served, teachers and staff receive extensive training on developing strong student-teacher relationships – a factor that research has demonstrated is critical to student success and their decision to remain a student beyond that critical first year as well as positive well-being and feelings of support.

In 2021-2022, 93% of students said it was easy to get along with their teachers, 88% of students said that there is an adult at their school they can turn to for support or advice, and 96% said there is an

---

[2] Source: http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2015/10/02/professional-learning-communities-still-work-if-done.html

[3] Source: Gatti, G. (2018). A comparison study of Pearson supported full-time schools to matched brick and mortar and virtual schools, examining the types of students who attend K–12 virtual school and the effects on performance of a highly mobile student body. Efficacy & Research Report. London: Pearson.

[4] Source: Pearson Virtual Schools annual survey results, 2022.

adult at their school who always wants them to do their best.[5] These positive perceptions were found to be significant predictors of achievement gains and also students' decisions to re-enroll at their cyber school. Teacher quality, responsiveness, and support were also the top reasons that parents reported being satisfied with cyber schools supported by Pearson.

With these factors in mind, the Pennwood Board has developed the following Non-Academic goals to measure our progress:

1. **Classroom Diagnostic Participation:** 100% of teachers in eligible subject and grade areas will participate in the CDTs by administering assessments at the beginning of the year and thereafter as needed depending on each student's needs and progress (with a minimum of 6 weeks in between).
2. **State Assessment Participation:** 95% of eligible students will participate in the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA or PASA) each year.
3. **Keystone (High School) Assessment Participation:** 95% of eligible students will participate in the Keystone Exams in Algebra 1, Biology, and English Literature each year (or an alternate equivalent as outlined in Act 158 of 2018).
4. **Parent Satisfaction:** Pennwood will have an average of 85% positive responses on the Annual Parent Satisfaction Survey in year one and will rise to 90% by year five.
5. **Student/Teacher Relationships:** Pennwood will conduct a survey of student-teacher relationships, student self-management skills, and social and emotional well-being in the fall and spring. Of the students who complete both surveys, 90% will either identify growth or high ratings regarding those three key factors each year.
6. **Student Enrollment Retention:** The percentage of students who stay with Pennwood throughout the school year (During School Year Retention) will average 80% across all grade levels each year.

I.3 Educational Program

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

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

Educational Program

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be more than just curriculum and teachers in a cyber environment. It will provide a comprehensive support network that encourages whole child success. The support network includes the Learning Coach, special education teachers, counselors, clubs, field trips, college and career programs, graduation planning, Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)/Response to Intervention (RTI) support, and other services that ensure student success.

The following descriptions of the unique core model elements explain how the needs of the students and families will be met through this unique school model:

---

[5] Source: Pearson Virtual Schools bi-annual Social Emotional Learning survey results; survey is based on the well-being scale developed by the University of Pennsylvania (Duckworth AL, Kautz T, Defnet A, et al. Students Attending School Remotely Suffer Socially, Emotionally, and Academically. Educational Researcher. 2021;50(7):479-482).

Connections Term: Pennwood will offer a mandatory, interim session, referred to as the C-Term. During this three-week term, students in grades K-12 will earn badges for completing activities aligned to Pennsylvania's Career Education and Work standards. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in test preparation at a critical time in March prior to state testing. For students needing additional support, they may work on credit recovery and remediation to get back on track and improve academic outcomes.

Badges: Career Competency badges will be provided during the C-Term and Engagement Badges throughout the school year.

Career Competency Badges

During the C-Term, students in grades K-8 will focus on the four Pennsylvania Career Readiness Standards[6] and one specific skill (identified by NACE as Career Readiness Competencies and by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the Anatomy of a Quality Employee):[7]

   a. Self-Awareness and Self-Management (PA Standards 13.1 and 13.4)
   b. Establish and Maintain Relationships (PA Standards 13.2 and 13.3)
   c. Social Problem-Solving Skills (PA Standards 13.2 and 13.3)
   d. People Skills
   e. Workplace Skills
   f. Applied Knowledge
   g. Personal Skills

Upon successful completion of the project or assignment, students will earn a Career Competency Badge. Students will be encouraged to complete additional projects for additional badges. However, the annual focus will aid in building community throughout the school.

Activities offered during the C-Term will begin with an overview of the skill and a teacher-led discussions on the application of that skill to the workforce. Week two of the three-week session will offer field trips, either school-led, or parent-led, to investigate application of the skill in work environments. During the final week of the session, students will complete a culminating project to demonstrate mastery and understanding.

In grades 9-12, eligible students will engage in Drexel University's Goodwin College Readiness Modules. These modules align with Pennwood's commitment to career and college readiness and complement Pennsylvania's Career Readiness Standards. As mentioned in other sections of this application, the modules will be designed to increase employment opportunities and/or college readiness and will be aligned to regional workforce needs to guide students into high-demand careers. The modules will expose students to innovation and problem solving in real-world contexts while decreasing the financial expense and time for completion for college pathway students as Drexel modules are included to students at no cost. We have included more information on the modules in Appendix J.

---

[6] Source: https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Safe%20Schools/PA%20Career%20Ready%20Skills/PA%20CRS%20Introduction.pdf (page 21)
[7] Source: https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/K-12/Safe%20Schools/PA%20Career%20Ready%20Skills/Anatomy%20of%20a%20Quality%20Employee.pdf

Career Competency Badges will result in a final project or successful completion of a Drexel module that will generate a grade in the second semester. For students that utilize this time to focus on credit recovery and/or remediation, students will receive the equivalent grade points as their peers participating in the Career Competency badge. The final grade for the project or student work will be documented on student transcripts with a letter grade, as appropriate per grade level, and will allow continuous monitoring by the teacher of completion and progress through student gradebooks.

Engagement Badges

In addition to the Career Competency Badges, students will be encouraged to and celebrated for earning Engagement Badges designed to recognize the importance of participation and engagement in the online learning experience.

1. LiveLesson Participation – awarded at the teacher's discretion by attending a high percentage of LiveLesson sessions, quality interaction during LiveLesson sessions, etc.
2. Perfect Attendance – awarded for logging in and completing the required number of lessons every day for the required 195 days (180 days plus the 15 days of the C-Term).
3. State Assessment Participation – awarded to students in grades 3-11 and in high school for completion of the PSSA and Keystone Exams.
4. Diagnostic Assessment Participation – awarded to students who participate in the Renaissance Star 360 assessment and/or the Classroom Diagnostic Assessments (CDTs).
5. Field Trip Participation – awarded for attending at least two field trips.
6. Club Participation – awarded for participating in at least one club during the school year.

Led by the Director of Specialized Programs and staff committee, the student body and staff will participate in an end-of-year celebration recognizing the Career theme of the school year and students who earned Engagement Badges. Individual student projects will be shared, and engagement badges will be awarded at this time.

Teachers: The full-time virtual school staff will be Pennsylvania-certified teachers, specially trained in online delivery and personalized instruction. Teachers will work remotely to deliver instruction to an online classroom of students and work one-on-one with students through highly interactive, technology-facilitated communication tools providing quality, timely feedback on assignments.

Students benefit from a top-quality, curriculum that meets all Pennsylvania Academic Standards. Effective, Pennsylvania-credentialed teachers are a key part of the program. Teachers are in regular contact with students via email, telephone, LiveLesson® sessions, discussion boards, message boards, and other channels. Teachers instruct, motivate, monitor, and evaluate student progress; personalize the curriculum; provide feedback; intervene as needed to ensure student success; lead field trips; and clarify the curriculum for the students. There is a healthy interplay between formative and summative assessment to inform instructional decision-making and additional student support.

Teacher Professional Development: In addition to ongoing professional development to increase effectiveness and quality of teacher pedagogy, customized professional development for school staff is provided, given school-specific needs and the school's career focus, some of which arise from reviewing assessment results.

Counselors: Counselors provide academic, personal, social, and college and career readiness support to students. Counselors will partner with teachers to provide an extra layer of monitoring for the whole student. This will include working directly with students via the phone, email, and LiveLesson sessions. Student academic progress will be tracked on a daily basis via online discussions, quizzes, tests, science labs, and portfolio items to ascertain mastery of the material.

Counselors will partner with the Director of Specialized Programs, who will lead the C-Term, to assist students in identifying Career Engagement projects (see above) that align with the student's career goals.

Student Performance Reporting: Reports provide real-time student performance data on assessments. The reports identify the students' score and the performance against each item. For some courses, objective-level performance data is also provided. Teachers can use this data to determine which students need more help with a concept and provide interventions. They may then participate in individual or small group tutoring virtually with these students targeting specific skills.

Curriculum-Based Assessments: Teachers conduct curriculum-based assessments (CBAs), via telephone conversation or through one-on-one LiveLesson sessions, as a quick and effective way to gather information on students' understanding of concepts. CBAs are used to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts and to validate a student's understanding of concepts against the collected formative data within the Education Management System (EMS). CBAs also assist teachers in verifying that students are doing their own work.

A Leading Education Management System (EMS): The EMS, called Pearson Online Classroom, is the platform for organizing and supporting the entire educational environment for the school. This suite of web-based software delivers assignments and tracks activities (whether conducted virtually or offline) while monitoring the completion of individual lessons as well as mastery of skills and knowledge, all under the watchful eye of administrators, teachers, and Learning Coaches. The EMS operates within a secure, robust technology infrastructure protecting data from loss and intrusion while maintaining a safe environment. Students, teachers, administrators, and Learning Coaches access the EMS to organize, document, and interact, ensuring an unprecedented level of engagement. The EMS is continually updated and improved upon for the success of schools and families. All new releases and updates of the EMS are automatically provided.

Interactive Reviews: As part of the educational program, interactive reviews are provided for additional practice opportunities. These opportunities are embedded in the curriculum and serve to give students targeted feedback on concepts and skills.

Synchronous Contact / LiveLesson® Session: In a cyber charter school setting, synchronous contact is defined as a live interaction occurring in real time between teachers and students. A real-time, interactive web conferencing tool, LiveLesson sessions allow teachers to work synchronously and directly with students using voice-over IP, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. These sessions are also recorded so students can watch on their own schedule. This live support is a direct reflection of formative assessment that indicates to the teacher where additional efforts are needed to help students master the content. Teachers document all synchronous contact with a student within the student's Log in the EMS.

Figure 2. LiveLesson sessions allow teachers to work synchronously and directly with students.

Summative Assessments: Units of online instruction culminate with a summative unit test. Teachers review these results and make decisions to inform instruction and identify additional supports that may be are needed to improve learning outcomes for each student.

Personalized Learning Plan with Real-Time Performance Data: This instructional process creates a unique learning experience for each student. The EMS provides teachers with data to inform ongoing progress monitoring and instructional modifications. Teachers use student performance data to create lesson modifications, customize assignments, customize assessments to address students' learning needs, or to provide students with additional practice opportunities.

Graduation Plan: Within the platform, the Graduation Planning tool assists school staff and families to define and track graduation requirements tailored to the diploma type and student post-graduation goals.

Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT): The Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) are online assessments designed to provide teachers with valuable diagnostic information to guide and differentiate instruction. The CDT reports provide a snapshot of how students are performing in relation to the Standards Aligned System (SAS) and help identify student academic strengths and areas in need of improvement. Educators receive links to curricular resources and materials that align to the Learning Progression Map. The untimed, computer-adaptive assessments focus on Literacy, Mathematics, or Science and include approximately 48-60 items.

CDTs provides information that is typically not identified through other types of assessments. CDTs focus on individual student growth by identifying strengths and weaknesses, and potential strategies to improve that learning. Benchmark assessments compare student understanding or performance against specific grade-level standards rather than taking a snapshot of student understanding. Combined, these assessments enable teachers to provide high quality, standards-based instruction that is differentiated for the needs of individual learners.

Benchmark Assessments: The school will use Renaissance Star 360 for formative, benchmark assessments to measure student proficiency in reading and math and to obtain a scaled score that can be used to measure academic growth. Renaissance Star 360 is a comprehensive pre-K–12 assessment suite that enables greater student growth as teachers lead students toward mastery of state-specific learning standards for reading, math, and early literacy. The computer-adaptive assessments identify areas of strength and need in the student's learning profile and measure student growth during the school year to help formulate learning goals and monitor student progress.[8]

State Testing: As a public school, Pennwood will ensure students will participate in required state testing, including summative assessments such as the PSSA for ELA and Math in grades 3-8 and Science in grades 4-8, and the Keystone exam for Literature, Algebra, and Biology.

Student Status/Escalation Process: The school tracks and reports ongoing student progress based on the objective quantitative data generated by the EMS. Staff members analyze attendance, participation, performance, assessment submissions, and teacher contact. The student status is displayed on the home page for instant identification of potential problem areas. The Escalation Process goes into effect when students are in statuses other than "On-Track" to ensure students continue to gain the full benefits of this educational option and unique school choice.

Learning Coach: Each student will have a Learning Coach, typically a parent, who is encouraged to work in-person with the student. If a parent is not available, the parent or guardian identifies and designates another responsible adult to serve as the Learning Coach. In this application, the parent/legal guardian is sometimes referred to as the Caretaker. Often the Caretaker is the same person who functions as the Learning Coach, but in some situations these roles may be held by two different people.

The Learning Coach helps keep students motivated and on track, and regularly communicates with the students' teachers. In this proposal, we refer to Learning Coaches when referencing this role; there are also references to parents or legal guardians where language references responsibilities that are broader than that of the Learning Coach.

Curriculum & Content

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will use the award-winning, high-quality, web-based curriculum and instructional program from Pearson that meets standards at the state and national levels while also integrating the best materials, texts, and resources available. The curriculum meets the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Ch. 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment) and will meet any subsequent regulations promulgated. The curriculum is aligned with the standards set forth in Appendices A-2 through E of 22 Pa. Code. Ch. 4. The curriculum supports the school's mission to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and practical career skill development.

The Board believes the school will benefit from the best practices developed from implementing a proven core model of cyber learning over the past 20 years. Not only is the Pearson program accredited by Cognia, formerly AdvancED, but Pearson was named a Tech & Learning Winner: 2021 Best Remote & Blended Learning Tools for Primary (K-6) and Secondary (6-12). Tech & Learning judges deemed Pearson partner schools as a standout for helping students, parents, and teachers succeed in new learning environments. Another recognition came from the American Consortium for Equity in Education in 2021: Melissa Brown, Lead Director of Schools for Pearson's K-12 online school program, won a

---

[8] Source: https://www.renaissance.com/products/assessment/star-360/?int_content=int_web

"Champion of Equity" Award from the organization for her service as a role model for students, and for creating and implementing equity and inclusivity practices.

The curriculum is updated regularly, based on a rigorous analysis of student performance on state standards as measured by state testing results and internal assessments. As state standards are modified or changed in the future, Pearson will continue to modify or update the curriculum to meet state standards. The curriculum provides instruction throughout the lessons in both synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Teachers provide LiveLesson sessions, office hours, small-group interventions, and one-on-one tutoring sessions throughout the week.

Elementary and Middle School Curriculum (Grades K-8)

Students in grades K-5 will be enrolled as elementary school students, and students in grades 6-8 will be enrolled as middle school students. The program of instruction for students in grades K-8 has the ability to be individualized, personalized, and delivered in a non-traditional environment to give students the best pathways to success. Pennsylvania-certified teachers will deliver a personalized elementary school and middle school curriculum that will be tailored to best meet the needs of their students.

Below is an overall description of the curriculum with more detail available in Appendix A. However, the exact courses offered at the school will vary each year (with the anticipation of expanding offerings) and depend on the number of students enrolled, the grade levels of enrolled students, the number of staff hired meeting educational, operational, and financial requirements and the priorities of the school.

Although students in a full-time cyber school have flexibility in their daily schedules, elementary and middle school students will take six to nine courses per year. The following lessons will be scheduled on a weekly basis for students in elementary grade levels, K-5. In addition to lessons, students will have the opportunity to participate in clubs, activities, and extracurricular experiences on a weekly basis.

Kindergarten-Grade 5:

- Language Arts, 5 lessons per week
- Mathematics, 5 lessons per week
- Social Studies, 3 to 4 lessons per week
- Science, 3 to 4 lessons per week

- Fine Arts, 1 to 2 lessons per week
- Education Technology, 1 lesson per week
- Physical Education & Health, 1 lesson per week, with daily physical activity
- Optional – electives such as Music, Sign Language, Mandarin Chinese, or Spanish

Grades 6-8:

- Language Arts, 5 lessons per week
- Mathematics, 5 lessons per week
- Social Studies, 3 to 5 lessons per week
- Science, 4 lessons per week

- Fine Arts, 1 to 2 lessons per week
- Education Technology, 1 lesson per week
- Physical Education & Health, 1 lesson per week, with activities for daily physical activity
- Optional – electives such as Music, Sign Language, and Spanish

The curriculum includes a variety of multimedia and interactive practices to reinforce standards for language arts and math at each grade level. LiveLesson sessions, which provide for real-time direct instruction with individual and small groups of students using Internet based phone service, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing, allow teachers and students to interact with one another in real time in the online classroom. In addition, LiveLesson sessions may be recorded and saved for students to revisit at a later date if they missed them or want to refresh themselves on the topics covered.

World language instruction is available for students in grades 3-8. Advanced middle school students (typically grade 8) also have the option to take high school level French, German, Spanish, and Sign Language. Language courses integrate proven-effective online materials with a unique audio recording tool that allows teachers to hear and grade actual student speech. In addition to World Language courses, eligible middle school students may take high school courses in math, English language arts, social studies, science, and appropriate electives and will earn high school credit pending successful completion of the course.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will focus on developing and nurturing a culture of math acceptance and empowerment. With a focus on student engagement, activities and practices will provide opportunities for the individual to develop an awareness of and appreciation for math in the students' everyday lives; make math more approachable for students, parents, and teachers; build pride and confidence in math effort and achievements; and make math connections with college and career planning.

Music, a popular elective, is offered for different grade and experience levels and is aligned to the National Core Arts Standards as well as to Pennsylvania Academic Standards. With audio, visual, and interactive technologies, this course provides a unique and advanced learning experience. Students will use critical listening skills to analyze music while participating in interactive experiences. This elective will expand the student's knowledge of the foundations of music.

The curriculum also offers a selection of accelerated classes in math, science, and language arts. With individualized lessons, special courses for accelerated learners, and specialized teachers, an environment is created where talents are nurtured, and potential is realized.

High School Curriculum (Grades 9-12)
Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide a balanced, challenging high school experience focused on students pursuing paths that lead to success, whether via college or an immediate career choice.

Delivered by Pennsylvania-certified teachers, the high school curriculum provides a comprehensive program with multiple levels of academic coursework aligned to Pennsylvania Academic Standards that include Foundations, Standard, Honors, and Advanced Placement® (AP). The Foundations level courses review content in order to provide support and instruction in the prerequisite skill areas a student working at the Foundation level may need. Foundations courses may be structured differently (i.e., longer units might be organized into smaller chunks of content) and will have scaffolded supports for students. Some of the adjustments include the following:

- Adjusted on-screen text (Lexile level, organization of key concepts, visual cues);
- Differentiated graphic organizers;
- Increased practice on key concepts;
- Unit companions or study guides to support students as they navigate through the course content;
- Increased support with vocabulary; and
- Differentiated assessments (wording on questions as well as adjusted portfolios).

While all levels are designed to meet standards and provide students with a rigorous curriculum, levels enable differentiation based on student needs and college and career goals. Students will work with an academic placement advisor or their school counselor, depending on grade level, to determine appropriate course level placement that best meets the student's needs. Students entering 10th-12th grades are typically supported in course placement by the school counselor.

The proposed high school curriculum includes a wide variety of electives and intensive world language instruction. Courses will continue to be added as they become available.

The high school program will include both teacher- and student-directed instruction, with feedback and support through asynchronous and synchronous e-learning tools. The high school curriculum incorporates a variety of best-in-class instructional materials, including digital versions of textbooks from major publishers, enhanced multimedia, interactive materials and resources, discussions, and/or communication/conferencing tools. In addition, students have offline assignments, projects, lab experiences, and practice work.

High school courses incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions which are required for all students. These discussions create opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students, increase problem solving skills, and provide opportunities for a "real-world" audience.

For academic and career planning, the high school model also includes a host of services and procedures to address credits, transcripts, and counseling. It is important for students to start early on planning for graduation and post-secondary education or the world of work. Without early planning, students run the risk of missing crucial courses that might thwart their plans or aspirations.

An Honors/AP program will also be available for high school students. The program has a history of success, as demonstrated by a national survey of families with students enrolled in honors or AP classes at schools supported by Pearson. In the 2020-21 survey conducted by Shapiro + Raj (an independent market research company), 90% of parents were satisfied with the school's curriculum and 94% give the learning platform a thumbs up.[9]

High school students will have access to college preparatory courses and may choose from Honors courses, College Board–approved online AP courses, and Dual Credit courses. By enrolling in these demanding college-level courses, students demonstrate their commitment to higher education, which may give them a competitive advantage during the college application process.

Extended School Year: C-Term

Research has shown that the extended school year model increases academic outcomes for students. A meta-analysis of the literature found that "extending school time can be an effective way to support student learning."[10] In addition, the study found that students most at risk saw the most benefits. Pennwood's founding board is dedicated to serving students in the state to help them on their pathway to success through an extended school year. A key element of the extended school year will be making community connections, hence the name of the three-week school session: Connections Term (C-Term).

The founders of the school recognize that COVID-19 created unprecedented learning loss and a generation of students who may need additional support. In Pennsylvania, test scores in both English and Math dropped by 3.5% to 11%[11] respectively from the pre-pandemic levels as a result of COVID-19. A 2021 article in *Ed Week* by a Harvard professor identified research supporting the importance of

---

[9] Source: https://www.connectionsacademy.com/about/academic-excellence
[10] Source: Extending the School Day or School Year: A Systematic Review of Research (1985–2009) - Erika A. Patall, Harris Cooper, Ashley Batts Allen, 2010. sagepub.com
[11] Source: https://www.fox43.com/article/news/local/schools-attempt-to-rectify-pandemic-learning-loss/521-d81fd079-55ae-4a0b-b0cc-8e06573fb629

extending the school year and its correlation to increased student performance.[12] The article recognizes the impact of learning loss due to COVID-19 and stresses the importance of effective intervention strategies, such as extending the school year, that increases student outcomes, especially those students who are most at-risk. Pennwood will provide this unique opportunity to extend the school year to help all students move closer to where they would otherwise be had they not endured the pandemic (especially our most vulnerable populations) and then accelerate their learning through unique opportunities to make learning relevant, engaging, and individualized.

Pennwood's instructional plan for the three-week C-Term is firmly based on research and best practices of how students learn. For example, Hill (2021) identified that adding two to six weeks of instruction to the school year results in the same academic results as 36 weeks of high-dosage tutoring. Pennwood plans to add the three-week C-Term to create opportunities for project-based learning for on-track students, as well as test preparation, credit recovery, and remediation options for students who need additional support. Students will have the opportunity to participate in all learning options during the C-term, individualized by their interest, time, and needs.

The Education Trust (2021) in the publication entitled "Strategies to Solve Unfinished Learning"[13] outlined the following features that must be in place to ensure that expanded learning time is

---

[12] Source: Hill, H. "Learning Recovery: The Research on Tutoring, Extended School Year, and Other Strategies, Education Week, April 28, 2021.
[13] Source: https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Expanded-Learning-Time-as-a-Strategy-to-Solve-Unfinished-Learning-March-2021.pdf

effective:

HOW EFFECTIVE IS EXPANDED LEARNING TIME?

We looked at the research to help leaders navigate these complicated decisions. The chart below shows how implementing different features of expanded learning impacts its effectiveness.

Features	More Effective		Less Effective
Curriculum	Aligned, individualized, & high-quality curriculum	Clear program goals but not aligned to curriculum	No clear program goals
Training and Coaching	Pre-service & ongoing training, & coaching	Pre-service training only	No training
When and Where	During the regular school year	Mandatory summer programs	After school or weekends
Attendance	Mandatory during the school day	Mandatory other times	Voluntary with incentives	Voluntary wiith no incentives
Total Annual Hours	Significant time (45-100 hours)	Too little time (less than 44 hours)	Too much time (more than 100 hours of reading)
Class Sizes	10-15 students	15-20 students	20+ students
Teachers	Certified teachers		Non-certified instructors

Figure 3. Pennwood will ensure that expanded learning time is effective by implementing these research-based practices.

While the impact of COVID-19 will reverberate for the near future, it is important to realize that expanded learning time will benefit all current and future students of Pennwood Cyber Charter School. As part of our school design, the founders have ensured the most effective features of expanded learning are implemented. More details can be found in the body of the charter application, but the following are a few highlights:

1. Curriculum – Virtual learning is designed to be individualized and student-centered. Our intended curriculum provider, Pearson, has over twenty years of experience in designing online curriculum centered on the student. We will partner with Pearson to expand their traditional offering during the C-Term. The supplemental offerings will include test preparation, targeted intervention, instructional materials, online tutoring, credit recovery, project-based learning focused on core employability skills, and finally a unique partnership with Drexel University's Goodwin College focused on life-skills to ensure success in career or post-secondary education. Teachers will identify the path(s) for learning and match each student with the appropriate opportunity for their growth journey during the C-Term.

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

2. Training and Coaching – Additional training will be developed and provided to teachers by the dedicated Director of Specialized Programs focused on the C-Term as well as by Pearson.

3. When and Where – Research demonstrates that the most effective strategy is to utilize expanded learning time during the school year. Pennwood will offer the three-week term during March. The March timeframe was established to maximize project-based learning and targeted intervention on state testing and other learning opportunities. The expanded calendar will be fully explained on Pennwood's publicly accessible website and will be reiterated to students and families during the enrollment process.

4. Attendance – Attendance will be mandatory for students. There will be flexibility in time and place, but a grade will be issued based upon work completed during the C-Term. In addition, the founding board plans to make this an exciting learning experience for students by providing badges for key competencies gained during this time period.

5. Total Annual Hours – The Education Trust outlined that the time allocated for expanded learning needs to range between 45-100 hours to be most effective.[14] Our plan includes at the high school level 1-2 hours per week of live synchronous lessons by Drexel University faculty, 6 hours per week of teacher-led direct small group instruction, and 15-20 hours per week of independent learning modules which may include credit recovery, test prep, and interventions. In grades K-8, our plan includes 10 hours per week of Career Competency curriculum, 10 hours per week of test preparation and remediation where necessary, and 5 hours per week of independent work. In both cases, it will result in more than 75 hours of learning time during the three-week session.

6. Class Sizes – Students will have the opportunity during the C-Term to attend LiveLesson sessions in a whole class format; however, there will be many opportunities for small group and 1:1 interaction. Virtual learning allows for easy identification by teachers to target instruction, based upon student progress and individualized need.

7. Teachers – Highly trained teachers with enthusiasm for expanded learning opportunities will be a key component of the success of the C-Term. This three-week session will provide additional opportunities for teachers to individualize instruction and provide unique opportunities for learning, such as field trips and project-based learning that the traditional semester-based curriculum may not provide. It will be a great enhancement to the traditional curriculum and will be a highlight for students and teachers alike.

8. Administrative Support - There will also be a Specialized Program Assistant Coordinator at each grade band assigned to liaise with the Director of Specialized Programs to ensure each grade level has age-appropriate content during the term. This staff will serve as coaches to other grade level teachers. In addition, each grade level will have a grade level specialist for the C-term and badging opportunities.

Badging

Another key component of Pennwood's instructional model is badging, also referred to as micro-credentialing. Badging represents evidence of an academic or professional achievement and has been used for years by the United States military as well as organizations such as both the Boy and Girl Scouts of America. Digital badging, however, not only leverages the visualization of a badge but also the

---

[14] Source: https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Expanded-Learning-Time-as-a-Strategy-to-Solve-Unfinished-Learning-March-2021.pdf

motivation of gamification, such as "leveling up" and encourages progress by achievement of milestones. Pennwood intends to capture this element in its design during its extended year session and to increase engagement during the entire academic year, both with the goal of improving overall academic outcomes and college and career readiness.

According to Harvard Business Publishing, in a blog called "Leading the Way" by Sarah Pakstis,[15] the value of badges is realized by the learner through their ability to map out and individualize the learning journey creating increased self-efficacy, relevance, and motivation. "For organizations and for learners alike, keeping up with the demands of today's complex, demanding, and rapidly evolving workplace means a commitment to lifelong learning... Badges represent the successful completion of a program or course with a verifiable description of the specific knowledge, skills, and criteria required to earn the badge."[16] After completing the work, learners are then able to display the badge they have earned on portfolios or social media networking sites giving learners a way to share their abilities online in a straightforward and verifiable way. By providing a portable digital object issued by a third party, it provides digital evidence of an achievement that is verifiable, consistent, and descriptive.

<u>Why Use Badges?</u>

Digital badges continue to be a growing area of demand for learners at all levels, including elementary, secondary, post-secondary, in addition to professional development and credentialing programs for a variety of career fields. Badges can serve multiple purposes for students:

- Motivation/incentives

- Rewards and recognition

- Positive behavior reinforcement

- Goal-setting and attainment

- Verified skills achievement

- Acquisition of benchmark competencies and skills (provides an alternative way to assess students beyond the traditional summative assessment formats)

Pennwood badges are backed by assessed evidence with criteria that is linked to specific core competencies identified by National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) and influenced by Pennsylvania's Career Education and Work Standards (Chapter 4, Title 22). Students are trained to communicate the progress they are making toward mastering the skills they need for their individual learning journey. To provide our scholars with the focus and motivation to continue their learning journey, Pennwood will offer badges validated through Credly that focus on four main types of challenging and relevant skills: Career Awareness, Career Acquisition, Career Retention and Advancement, and Entrepreneurship.

Pennwood will be supported by a leader in digital credentials. Credly[17] has issued over 53 million digital credentials and is the network of choice for 3,000+ certification, assessment, and training providers to issue their credentials.

---

[15] Source: https://www.harvardbusiness.org/for-organizations-and-learners-the-benefits-of-badging-are-clear/

[16] Ibid.

[17] Digital Credentials (credly.com)

Respected Credentials for the Most In-Demand Skills

The world's most recognized brands recognize their people on Credly

| Associations | Businesses | Training & Education |

Figure 4. Pennwood will offer badges validated through Credly that focus on career competency and challenging, relevant skills.

Badges earned by students will consist of both those awarded by the School and those awarded by college and industry partners. Career Competency badges via Credly will be offered in grades K-8; those offered in grades 9-12 will also include badges from higher education partners such as Drexel's Goodwin College program as well as Credly. Students in grades K-8 will earn Career Competency Badges for Self-Awareness and Self-Management; Establishing and Maintaining Relationships; Problem Solving Skills; People Skills; Workplace Skills; Applied Knowledge and Personal Skills. These badges will be developed in consultation with the Director of Specialized Programs, their support team, and Pearson.

Students at the high school level will earn badges through Pearson's partnership with Drexel's Goodwin College Readiness Modules. Modules will be designed to increase employment opportunities and/or college readiness and will be aligned to regional workforce needs to guide students into high-demand careers. The modules will expose students to innovation and problem solving in real-world contexts while decreasing the financial expense and time for completion for college pathway students as Drexel modules are included to students at no cost.

Students in all grades may also earn Engagement Badges throughout the year for Live Lesson Participation, Perfect Attendance; State Assessment Participation; Diagnostic Assessment Participation; Field Trip Participation and Club Participation. Through Engagement badges, Pennwood envisions building a strong and dynamic school culture that connects all students and staff while building global citizens of the future.

Data will be provided to teachers and counselors to track student progress with badging and to make suggestions for the future. All badges earned by a student while attending Pennwood will be collected into a portable "badge portfolio."

Motivation & Badging

There are many reasons why badging will be a key component of the school. One of the main reasons is motivation and rewards/recognition. Badging is inherently motivational as students get the ability to complete short learning objectives demonstrating skill, receive a visual recognition of the

accomplishment through a badge, and share via LinkedIn (high school students only) or other social media platforms (high school students only). In addition, learners have autonomy over their learning which creates engagement in the learning process.

In a 2013 report entitled "An Open Badge System Framework," it states that badges "have been successfully used to set goals, motivate behaviors, represent achievements, and communicate success in many contexts" and proposes that when learning happens across various contexts and experiences, "badges can have a significant impact, and can be used to motivate learning, signify community and signal achievement."[18]

There are several studies that document the effects of badging on motivation. A review of 23 research studies showed that digital badges improve student engagement and motivation.[19] In a study examining badging with kindergarteners, teachers stated that "the kids really start to care because they see their success and have control over that.....the digital badge helps kids' motivation to learn beyond what is assigned...digital badges teach more than just memorization; the kids have the responsibility to create their goals and go after them." The researchers concluded that digital badges improved the student experience through authentic learning, increased equity, facilitated growth in learning and validated skill achievement .[20] Another study found that there was a strong correlation between satisfaction, final grades, and the number of badges earned in a web and graphic design course.[21] Pennwood's design for badging is based on research ensuring student motivation and engagement will be high during the three-week C-Term and throughout the school year and at each grade level.

Academics & Badging

One of the most important reasons to utilize badges in the learning process is improved academic outcomes. Pennwood's plan includes the inclusion of badging in grades Kindergarten through 12th to improve academic outcomes. While most of the research on badging focuses on secondary and post-secondary education, there are several studies and evidence supporting the use of badging in elementary grades. A 2018 study examined second-graders and their reading performance. The results demonstrated that "the acquisition of digital badges translated to more reading level achievement for the experiential group because badges encourage student independence in learning, allow students to track their progress, eliminate questions about missed work, and garner individual feedback and improvement"[22]. Another study examined honors chemistry students and demonstrated that digital badging resulted in higher academic achievement. Students in the digital badging group scored significantly better on a summative assessment than the non-experimental group.[23] The Pennwood founders believe strongly that the inclusion of badging and extended school year will improve academic performance by increasing engagement, skills development, learner control, and feedback.

Future Readiness through Drexel University's Goodwin College

Pennwood's vision is "to prepare students to become adaptable learners who have the academic, career-readiness and life skills they need to enter a changing world with confidence." Pennwood

---

[18] Source: https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/badges-in-education/

[19] Source: https://bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/bjet.12709

[20] Source: https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1271&context=cup_commons_grad_edd

[21] Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317608572_Exploring_Digital_Badges_in_University_Courses_Relationships_between_Quantity_Engagement_and_Performance

[22] Source: The Effects of the Acquisition of Digital Badges on Second Grade Literacy (core.ac.uk) , p. 81

[23] Source: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341190540_Using_Criteria-Based_Digital_Badging_in_High_School_Chemistry_Unit_to_Improve_Student_Learning

recognizes the importance of future-ready skills and is leveraging Pearson's partnership with Drexel University 's Goodwin College to offer Career and College Readiness Modules for students in grades 9-12. Drexel University is a world-class comprehensive R1 research institution and a global leader in experiential education which makes an ideal partner for Pennwood. The Goodwin College of Professional Studies at Drexel lives a mission that dates back to the founding of Drexel University and recognizes that success can only come as a result of an educational environment steeped in flexibility, support, and opportunity. The inclusion of the Career and College Readiness Modules in the development of the high school curriculum is a key component of success for Pennwood students. The Goodwin Readiness Modules are opportunities that blend high school and post-secondary coursework to develop readiness and technical skills, pursue high-demand career opportunities and create a pathway to college.

Goodwin Readiness Modules are developed and taught by highly experienced, trained, and credentialed college faculty. All Goodwin Readiness Modules are developed exclusively for students attending high school, are completed entirely online, and include experiential activities. The modules are designed to support individualized student goals by developing a plan in high school to their future pathway after high school.

The benefits of the Goodwin Readiness Modules include, but are not limited to the following:

- Offer rigorous instruction and accelerated learning modules

- Provide academic support services to support student success

- Present students with high touch advisement

- Increase skills to increase employment opportunities and/or college readiness

- Align to regional workforce needs, guiding students into high-demand careers

- Expose students to innovation and problem-solving in real-world contexts

- Decrease financial expense and time to completion for college pathway students

There are four readiness modules:

1. Direct Your Future: Career Readiness & Preparedness: Students will be supported to think of their lives as a journey. Students will be challenged to focus on themselves and the world of work, to learn how to map out and prepare for a successful career path.

2. Power Up Your Power Skills: Preparing students with a combination of power skills that include, but are not limited to, the ability to problem-solve, confidently present/public speak, collaborate, complex and critical thinking and enhanced interpersonal capabilities.

3. Digital Connect: Technology in Action: Innovation of and with technology is fundamental for career and college success. Students will be empowered with the skills to access and organize knowledge, be exposed to digital tools to broaden their perspectives, and enrich their future professional success by developing and employing strategies for understanding and solving problems in ways that leverage technology.

4. Prioritize You: Change, Challenge and Choice: Focusing on identifying and learning strategies related to self-care, coping and wellness. Topics such as self-care, mental and physical wellness, stress and effective coping, loss and grief, and putting change into perspective.

As mentioned above, each of the modules will be taught by Goodwin College faculty and offered to students in grades 9-12. Each virtual session will be one hour in duration, once a week for each module.

Pennwood teachers will provide supplemental support to students, and the modules will be facilitated during the C-Term. The modules will be comprised of approximately 50 students in each cohort. Assignment and module work will focus on project-based learning, with projects and learning presented in a scaffolded design resulting in the work building from week to week and culminating into a final project due at the end of the three weeks. This work will result in a grade that will be included in the second semester.

In addition, the partnership will continue throughout the academic year. Early discussions identified several ways to engage over the course of the year, such as a possible residency in the summer quarter and webinars on topics geared toward students and parents. The student/parent webinars could include topics such as "Understanding Financial Aid," "Preparing Your Child for College or the Workforce," and "Visiting College to Evaluate Fit." Providing an opportunity for a summer residency and touchpoints throughout the year will provide a solid foundation of consistent engagement with Drexel, Pennwood staff, and Pennwood students and families.

Completion of the modules by students will result in certification and/or badging. (See Appendix J for more information on modules for grades 9-12). In a research report published by Wiley University Services, 54% of employers said they view micro-credentials as extremely/very important.[24] Completion of the micro-credentials will support student success for the future.

Project-Based Learning

A key component of the C-Term will be Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL provides an opportunity for students to engage in learning through meaningful and real-world work. PBL Works at the Buck Institute for Education is an industry leader in project-based learning for over 23 years. According to the Institute,[25] students develop content knowledge through "critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication." PBL Works defines PBL as a "teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge."

Critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication are key readiness skills and are a focus at Pennwood. In reviewing the Institute's work, along with the Pennsylvania Career Readiness Standards and NACE recommendations, students will have the ability to receive badges in essential skill areas by engaging and solving an authentic, challenging problem or question. The following are the readiness standards from Pennsylvania Career Readiness, NACE Career Readiness Competencies, and PDE's Anatomy of a Quality Employee) that the C-Term will focus on:

- Self-Awareness and Self-Management (13.1 and 13.4)
- Establish and Maintain Relationships (13.2 and 13.3)
- Social Problem-Solving Skills (13.2 and 13.3)
- People Skills
- Workplace Skills
- Applied Knowledge
- Personal Skills

The table below outlines sample questions from PBL Works that could be explored during the three-week C-Term by grade level.

---

[24] Source: Reimagining the Workforce 2021: Closing the Skills Gap Through Education. Wiley.
[25] See https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl

Grade	Career Readiness Standards	PBL Question
K	People Skills Workplace Skills	What makes someone a community hero?
1	People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	How can we take care of the environment?
2	Social Problem-Solving Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	How can we make stories come alive?
3	Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge	How can we as comic book designers build superhero worlds that teach others about math?
4	Self-Awareness/Self-Management Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	How can we use data to reduce our families' impact on the environment?
5	Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge	How can we design a tiny house that meets the needs of families?
6	Self-Awareness/Self-Management Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	What should we do about cyberbullying?
7	Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	How can we as historians uncover and share stories about our community?
8	Self-Awareness/Self-Management Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	How can we, as podcast producers, share what our community is doing to work toward the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals?
9-12	Self-Awareness/Self-Management Establish/Maintain Relationships Social Problem-Solving Skills People Skills Workplace Skills Applied Knowledge Personal Skills	See Drexel Modules

Figure 5. Sample questions from PBL Works for student exploration in the C-Term

A challenging question similar to the ones in the above table will be presented to students. Students will have the opportunity to explore a real-world problem, make connections in the community, and allow for student voice and choice. The three-week C-Term will culminate in an interdisciplinary project with opportunities for critique and revision. The following chart outlines the key components of project-based learning according to the Buck Institute[26] that the School plans to implement during the C-Term:
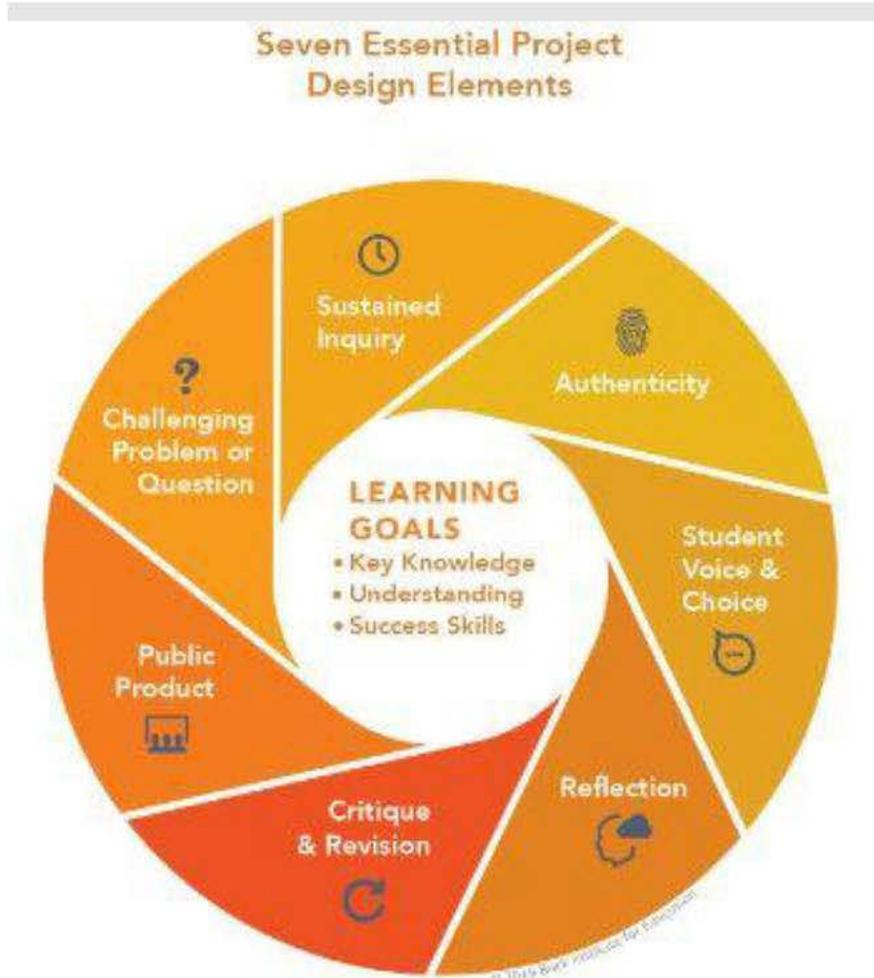

Figure 6. Key Components of Project-Based Learning

---

[26] Source: https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl

Research shows that project-based learning drives higher student engagement and increases academic performance. An analysis by the Buck Institute demonstrated that project-based learning improved social studies and literacy learning in second graders, science achievement in an elementary classroom, and economics knowledge in a high school economics course. The Buck analysis also found that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds demonstrated increased motivation and enhanced social-emotional learning skills after participating in project-based learning. One meta-analysis[27] of the research demonstrated that students engaged in project-based learning in grades 6-12 outperformed students who were engaged in more traditional methods of instruction. Using a project-based learning approach during the C-Term at Pennwood will promote student engagement and provide an innovative opportunity to increase student academic achievement.

Pennwood students will be required to complete the culminating activity of the C-Term. A custom course will be created for the three-week project. The course shell will include a customizable course title by grade level, course description (including badges to be earned), course expectations and goals, calendar reminders for each lesson, a course specific and/or project rubric, custom portfolio assessments with Dropbox capabilities, and a course specific gradebook. As discussed in previous sections, the utilization of the course will result in the final grade for the project/course being documented on student transcripts with a letter grade, as appropriate per grade level, and will allow continuous monitoring by the teacher of completion and progress through student gradebooks. As an added feature, the course will allow the School to pause other courses for a pre-determined number of days and/or weeks to allow the sole focus of the student to be given to the C-Term.

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional wellness is at the heart of the school's approach to teaching. Students at schools that implement the same curricular program learn to build healthy attitudes about themselves and others, develop self-efficacy, establish healthy habits of setting and achieving goals, and experience positive social interactions.

The Board will work to provide a robust school counseling program to serve all students, delivered by certified school counselor(s). The school counseling program will be evaluated annually to identify the changing needs of Pennwood students, adjusting the counseling program to meet those specific needs. The counseling program offers individual, group, and class counseling, as needed, and focuses on academic development, personal and social growth, and college and career readiness activities through a variety of communication tools (LiveLesson sessions, phone calls, message boards, newsletters, and face-to-face events that will take place throughout the state). The counseling team works to engage students and support both their academic and emotional growth.

Curriculum resources align with research-based recommendations from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. They synthesize the five SEL competencies from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) into three goals and break them down into standards that include performance descriptors. The resources focus on helping students develop Learning to Learn skills (self-awareness and self-management) as well as Skills to Learn that promote college and career readiness (social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.). Additionally, the school efforts will also include SEL for adults as part of building safe and caring learning environments and professional development to integrate ways that the teacher can advance social and

---

[27] Source: 2015. Jenson, Kimberly J. A meta-analysis of the effects of problem- and project-based learning on academic achievement in grades 6-12 populations. Seattle University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. https://www.proquest.com/openview/ba1d3a2c3a1c0a5ba73bf664dc252c8e/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750

emotional learning, social learning, and growth mindset strategies to meet students' needs.

 As part of this program, students will complete a fall and spring assessment of social and emotional learning skills as well as Personal and Social Competencies related to post-secondary and workforce readiness. During the 2020-2021 school year, students in those programs showed fall to spring gains in growth mindset, critical thinking skills, communication, responsible decision-making, and self-management skills related to the regulation of emotions, as shown in the chart.
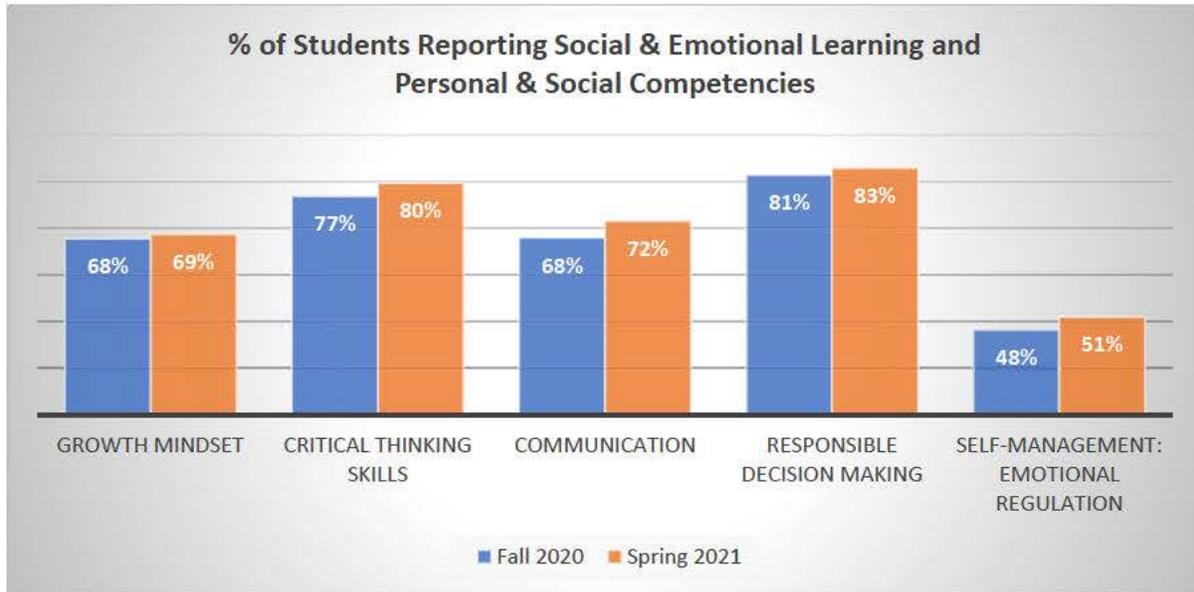
Figure 7. Students in a Full-time Pearson Program Show Growth in Social-Emotional Learning.

Graduation and Diploma Requirements

To be eligible to graduate and receive a diploma from Pennwood Cyber Charter School, a student must meet all the following requirements:

- Complete the 21 credits required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) in specific area and subject as outlined herein:
- Be enrolled during the semester immediately prior to graduation, and not be full-time enrolled in any other school;
- Earn a minimum of 3 of the credits (or 6 courses) required for graduation at the school, with at least 1.5 credits (or 3 courses) in the semester immediately prior to graduation; and
- Meet any other additional graduation requirements required by the school or state.
- A student may finish school during the school term in which they turn twenty-one (21) years old.

Area and Subject Requirements

Students must earn the following credits in the following areas and subjects:

Subject	# of Credits
English	4.0
Mathematics	3.0
Science	3.0

Social Studies	3.0
Arts or Humanities or Both	2.0
Health and Physical Education	1.0
Additional courses from among those approved for credit toward graduation by the school including approved vocational education courses.	5.0

Pennwood Cyber Charter School uses a standard whereby one credit equals approximately 180 hours of instruction (sometimes referred to as Carnegie Units).

Graduation Requirements for Students with Disabilities

More detail regarding graduation options for students with disabilities is detailed in the response to (B) in this section for Students with Disabilities.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will meet the requirements of 22 Pa. Code § 4.24, "High school graduation requirements" with regards to (g) Special education students. Students with disabilities who satisfactorily complete a special education program developed by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will be granted and issued a regular high school diploma by Pennwood Cyber Charter School.

Accreditation and NCAA Eligibility

Within its first three years of operation, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will apply for accreditation through an accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education such as NCA CASI or Middle States Association of Colleges & Schools (MSA). Accreditation is a diagnostic process to stimulate and guide continuous improvement, with a focus on teaching and learning, leadership capacity, and the effective use of resources. Furthermore, the educational services provider, Connections Education LLC (dba Pearson Virtual Schools) is also accredited by Cognia. Cognia offers accreditation and certification, assessment, professional learning, and improvement services to institutions and other education providers. As a global nonprofit working in over 80 countries, Cognia serves 36,000 institutions, nearly 25 million students, and 5 million educators every day.

In addition, many of the core and elective courses have been approved by the NCAA Eligibility Center for use toward initial eligibility when delivered by Pearson-affiliated teachers using the Pearson Online Classroom EMS platform. A list of these courses can be found here: https://www.connectionsacademy.com/program/accreditation.

This information is also included in Appendix B of this application.

Once the school is open and has its own CEEB code, Pearson will work with the school leadership team to add the school to the Pearson partner school district, which will then allow the school to have the same list of NCAA-approved courses as other schools supported by Pearson. NCAA course approvals ensure student athletes have access to the college-preparatory curriculum they need to achieve both their athletic and academic goals and aspirations.

Content in All Subject Areas – Grades K-12

In Appendix A, we have included course guides for the courses we are prepared to offer in the 2023-24 school year. Course guides provide detailed information on the curriculum, including course descriptions, unit summaries, lesson objectives, activities, and assessment types. In addition, in

Appendix A, we include a copy of the curriculum including:

- Planned instruction (provided in the unit summary of each unit within individual Course Guides in Section A.2 of Appendix A)
- Course objectives (provided in the unit and lesson objectives within individual Course Guides in Section A.2 of Appendix A)

- Course materials (included as a spreadsheet for the school's Course Materials in Section A.4 of Appendix A)

- Activities (provided in the unit summary and lesson objectives of each unit within individual Course Guides in Section A.2 of Appendix A)

- Estimated instructional time (provided in alignment documentation in Section A.5 of Appendix A)

- Alignment documentation in Section A.5 of Appendix A showing evidence of curriculum mapping to demonstrate that planned instruction for each course offering is aligned to:
    - Learning objectives and outcomes
    - Eligible content and assessment anchors that will be measured on the Pennsylvania state assessments
    - Pennsylvania academic standards

Course Development and Revision Model

The Board of Pennwood understands the importance of continually monitoring course content and revising as necessary and has partnered with Pearson, which has over 20 years of experience delivering high quality curriculum throughout Pennsylvania and nationally. However, the Board is dedicated to ensuring that the intended partner will meet Pennsylvania's rigorous standards and will ensure that curriculum continues to be developed and reviewed in the manner explained below.

In order to create quality curriculum, Pearson's Curriculum Development team has developed a rigorous process is followed for the creation of content. The average course has a six-year life cycle, and the following graphic shows the process of course creation and maintenance during this time period.

Objective Taxonomy and Standards Alignment: The Curriculum Frameworks team develops the objective taxonomy by doing an analysis of national and state standards, breaking them down into learning objectives, or discrete concepts and skills, and then looking at where those learning objectives align with each other, where they build on and support each other, and where they are distinct from each other. They then build lessons and assessments to fit those learning objectives.

Figure 8. The curriculum follows a consistent cycle of development and maintenance.

- Identify standards (state, national, NSQ, SEL)
- Create objective taxonomy
- Determine assessment strategy
- Develop course map (units, lessons, assessments) for national and state-specific course versions
- Develop prototype lessons and assessments
- Develop and release course versions
* Throughout the process involve school stakeholders in co-design and review

Course Creation

- Make minor edits and revisions based on teacher feedback
- Analyze assessment item performance
- Analyze student assessment data (benchmark tests, in-course assessments)
- Review StarTrack ratings

Years 1-2

- Make minor edits and revisions based on teacher feedback
  Make major edits and revisions(if needed) based on student performance data and state/district requirements

Years 3-4

- Continue minor edits and revisions
- Begin complete rewrite, starting with analysis of standards

Years 5-6

Using Language Arts 6 as an example, the Curriculum Frameworks team looks at the most commonly found learning objectives and uses those to build out the scope and sequence and the course map for our base grade 6 Language Arts course. Then, they identify which learning objectives are needed for each state and use those to build out the state-specific scopes and sequences and course maps, removing those learning objectives that weren't necessary in order to accommodate those that will have the greatest impact on achievement for students in that state.

The chosen curriculum aligns to the National Standards for Quality Online Courses. These standards may be found at https://www.nsqol.org/the-standards/quality-online-courses/.

Additionally, Pearson supports school efforts that include SEL for adults as part of building safe and caring learning environments. To address struggling learners in reading in math, supplemental instructional support programs are provided. These programs include Reading Eggs, Imagine Math, Study Island, Reading Eggs and Math XL. For students on an alternative curriculum path, N2Y, a third-party solution, is provided for instruction. Specifically, Unique Learning System provides standards aligned core content lessons for students requiring a modified curriculum and provides functional life skills lessons.

Scope and Sequence: During the analysis phase, the Curriculum Frameworks and Assessment Design teams create a purposefully structured and logically sequenced framework for the course. This framework is called the scope and sequence, which briefly outlines the standards, a suggested order for teaching content and skills, and a recommended number of lessons for each unit.

Course Map: A course map serves as the blueprint for a course and is heavily influenced by the objective taxonomy and scope and sequence. It provides an overview of the course content and helps in guiding the development of units and lessons in the course. Once the big picture is described, the unit maps provide additional information, including the specific content for each lesson. This may include the following elements:

- Standard alignment to lesson objectives and assessments
- Lesson content
- Essential vocabulary or key words
- Cross-curricular connections tapping into background knowledge and real-world applications
- Activities that allow the student to practice, reinforce, and extend learning
- Extensions and modifications to address different learning modalities
- Online resources that engage the learner
- Assessment maps

- Course and lesson metadata (e.g., lesson days, gradebook weights)

Third-Party Research Based Curriculum

The research-based[28] curriculum uses the following proven instructional principles:

- Curriculum fosters breadth and depth of understanding in subject area.

- Content is aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards.

- Curriculum is supported by quality, reputable, recently published textbooks, and/or proven instructional resources and materials.

- Content and assessments are accurate and unbiased.

- Content is current, relevant, and provides real-world applications.

- Content is appropriate for the learner (age, ability, background, reading level, style).

- Instructional design is adaptable and flexible to meet individual needs.

- Instructional design provides students opportunities to improve learning skills using technology (virtual labs and instruments, business software, online calculator).

- Navigation is intuitive and age appropriate.

- Scope of course is appropriate with regard to amount of content, length of course and lessons, and course requirements.

- Lesson introduction is effective, presents lesson objectives, accesses prior knowledge, sets expectations, and motivates students.

- Background information prepares students to access new content, skills, and strategies.

- Curriculum includes opportunities for developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills, real-world applications, collaboration, and independent study, and developing oral and written communication skills.

- Curriculum incorporates ongoing formative assessment and provides timely and appropriate feedback to students and teachers.

- Curriculum promotes active learning through interactive elements in each course (including online and/or offline interaction) that address diverse learning styles and preferences, including textual, visual, auditory, and/or hands-on.

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

Meeting the Educational Needs of Students with Disabilities & Special Education Programs

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504, and the Family Education Rights and Privacy (FERPA), the Americans with Disabilities Act

---

[28] American Psychological Association's Learner-Centered Psychological Principles: A Framework for School Reform and Redesign http://www.apa.org/ed/governance/bea/learner-centered.pdf

(ADA), and 22 Pa. Code Chapter 711 . The school will provide a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities, as identified under such Acts and policies. These supports include, but are not limited to, identifying, evaluating children with disabilities, and planning individualized education programs that meet each student's unique needs, in accordance with state and federal requirements. Pennwood special education leaders and intervention specialists will work closely with the general education curriculum teachers to ensure that every student receives accommodations, modifications, and all needed services to access and progress in the general education curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment according to each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Pennwood will have an open enrollment policy: any eligible student in Pennsylvania can attend. The school does not discriminate in its admissions policies or practices based on geography, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a student with a disability, or test scores.

Services for students with disabilities (according to students' needs) will include, but will not be limited to:

- Direct special education intervention support for a student, as outlined within their IEP, which may be provided via small group or individual LiveLesson virtual classes, and/or one-on-one sessions over the telephone or as otherwise appropriate based upon each student's needs as determined by the IEP team.

- Direct related service support (e.g., speech-language, occupational or physical therapy, etc.) provided virtually, face-to-face, home-based, at community sites, or therapist offices. The location of service is determined based on student needs and appropriateness of the location for the service.

- Ongoing progress monitoring including frequent and thorough review of student performance, attendance, and participation data as reported to the student, parent, and teacher through their respective home pages.

- Regular progress reporting to parents at least as frequently as general education progress reporting.

- Ongoing support and guidance from special education staff to the general education teachers to provide appropriate accommodations and modifications, as per a student's IEP, to the general education curriculum.

- Careful logging in EMS of every conversation, contact (by phone, email message, LiveLesson session, or other means) and consultation with the student and/or parent as well as general education teachers.

- Specific tracking and reporting for providers of direct/related services, with scrutiny by the special education staff of any missed appointments or incomplete services.

- Conducting triennial evaluations, or every two years for students with Intellectual Disabilities, or more frequently as appropriate. Conducting IEP team meetings, including the parents, for all new students to adopt or amend the IEP, or conduct an Annual Review. Prior Written Notice detailing the decisions of the IEP team are provided to parents along with Parental Rights at least once annually and at appropriate instances when IEP revisions are made.

As a public school, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C.A.§§ 1400 et. seq. and implementing regulations, including Section 300.209 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Pennwood will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities including, but not limited to identifying, evaluating, and planning educational programs, and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts.

Pennwood will ensure the delivery of special education and related services. Schools supported by Pearson have demonstrated success with special populations and EL populations nationally. Pearson will assist the school in providing these services and has extensive experience providing Special Education services to existing cyber schools in Pennsylvania and throughout the US. The school's Director of Special Education will review the student's documentation (IEP and Evaluation Report), if available during the enrollment process, and recommend course placement in collaboration with the School Counselor.

After enrollment, Pennwood staff and administrators will convene an IEP team meeting, which will include the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) and other appropriate IEP team participants, to adopt or amend the student's IEP as necessary. Pennwood will provide special education and related services in conformity with the IEP, either by adopting the existing IEP or by developing a new IEP for the student in accordance with the requirements of IDEA. Qualified special education staff with appropriate licenses and training will work closely with general education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers to ensure that every student receives accommodations, modifications, and all needed services to access and progress in the general education curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) according to their IEPs or to be provided research-based interventional curriculum if the student's IDEA disability(s) require the same.

Procedural Safeguards Notice

Parents of children who receive or who may be eligible for special education services have rights under IDEA 2004. The Procedural Safeguards Notice provides a detailed explanation of those rights. Pennwood will give parents a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice and the explanatory Procedural Safeguards Letter at least once each school year. Parents can also obtain a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice from Pennwood at any time. An additional document will be available to help parents to better understand the Notice document. The Parents' Rights: Understanding the Procedural Safeguards Notice provides a summary of those rights. Parents will also receive the Parents' Rights documents upon initial referral or upon the parents request for an evaluation and in accordance with discipline procedures when a change in placement occurs.

Surrogate Parent

As part of the IEP process, Pennwood will recognize a qualified adult must participate as the "parent" (34 CFR 300.30) for the student. A surrogate parent is someone who acts on the child's behalf in matters relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and provision of FAPE to the child. Pennwood will provide a surrogate parent as outlined by 34 CFR § 300.519. A surrogate will be appointed and trained on how to participate and make decisions on the child's behalf in the following situations as directed and limited by applicable state and federal laws and regulations: a biological, adoptive, foster, parent, or guardian are not available; a grandparent or step parent with whom the child lives or a person who is legally responsible for the child is not available; the child is an unaccompanied homeless youth without an adult who is able to act as an IDEA Parent.

Pennwood will have a method in place to secure a surrogate when needed. When it is determined that a student is in need of a surrogate parent, the surrogate will be appointed within 30 calendar days. Pennwood will maintain a pool of trained parent surrogates and may collaborate with Intermediate Units (IUs) when additional surrogates are needed.

Pennwood will not allow the following persons to be appointed as a surrogate parent: employees of an agency already involved in the care or education of the student; school employees; or persons with a potential conflict of interest.

Identifying Students and Child Find

As a public cyber charter school in Pennsylvania, Pennwood will be bound by the Child Find requirements of Chapter 711 of the Pennsylvania School Code, "Charter School and Cyber Charter School Services and Programs for Children with Disabilities," as well as the requirements of IDEA 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Child Find is the process of locating, evaluating, and identifying children (birth – 21 years) with disabilities who may be in need of special education and related services. Pennwood will follow federal and state law in identifying children who may need these services. If a parent shares a concern or makes any Child Find requests during the enrollment process, those concerns will be addressed immediately upon enrollment. If, after enrollment, Pennwood is made aware of a child who may require additional supports, the school's special education staff will contact the parents of the child to discuss the next steps in the evaluation and identification process. This process is provided at no cost to the family.

To identify students entering or already enrolled without prior special education identification, the Pennwood CEO and general and special education staff will conduct Child Find exercises to identify, locate and evaluate students who are in need of special education services by conducting regular reviews of teacher observations, implementing systematic screenings, analyzing assessment results, and data. Parents will also provide input and may initiate a Child Find request at any time while their students are enrolled at Pennwood. Additionally, Pennwood will engage in public awareness activities to ensure parents are informed about available special education services and how to request those services.

The Director of Special Education or school designee will serve as the Child Find Coordinator and provide Child Find information to school staff, parents, and state and local organizations and agencies. These efforts will include compliance with the special education referral process, providing professional development to staff and support to the school's Student Assistance Team (SAT), maintaining a deep understanding of and participation in the Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)/Response to Intervention (RTI) process, including universal screening procedures, creating and maintaining written policies and procedures related to Child Find, and involvement in public awareness activities related to Child Find.

Students may be referred for special education evaluation by their parents, teachers, or the SAT. The SAT, consisting of general education teachers, intervention specialists, and school administrators will regularly review data from universal screeners to identify struggling students. Identified students will be referred to the SAT. The SAT will consult with the parents and address struggling students' needs through the RTI process. With parental consent, the teacher will implement and document tiered interventions to address the student's greatest area(s) of need as well as and the response to interventions. The student's responses to MTSS efforts are used as one very important data metric in the determination of special education eligibility. Interventions will not be used to delay or deny a parent-requested special education evaluation.

Pennwood will comply with all state and federal policies regarding enrollment of special education students. After submitting the initial application to the school, all families are asked if their child has had an IEP within the last three years and if that IEP is currently active. The families can choose if they would like to disclose if the student has an IEP. A decision not to disclose the student's IEP status will not delay the student's enrollment. The IEP is reviewed to determine the level of each student's need and to consider the types of services required.

Provision of IEP-specified accommodations and modifications will be documented in each student's account in the EMS. Special education and related services will be delivered virtually with exceptions made to best address each student's individual needs. Decisions about the location of services will be made by the IEP team. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities will be educated with their peers; alternative placements or removal of children with disabilities from the general educational environment will only occur if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily as determined by the IEP Team. Decisions will be made in conformity with the LRE provisions described in federal regulations and guidance. In selecting the LRE, the IEP team will give consideration to any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services that they need.

Students with disabilities will not be removed from education in age-appropriate regular virtual classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general education curriculum. Students with disabilities will have the opportunity to participate in non-academic and extra-curricular clubs and activities to the same extent as all other students. Extracurricular clubs and activities will also serve as venues to develop social skills for students with learning differences.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide students with equal access to the education program and instructional materials as outlined in 22 Pa. Code § 711.45. Students with disabilities will receive access through the delivery of resources and accommodations tailored to each student's individual abilities and needs, including assistive technologies and individualized support. A continuum of placements will also be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services. Additionally, the continuum is aligned with state and federal guidelines. Consultative support will be provided to general education teachers to provide modifications and accommodations to the general education curriculum. The EMS provides teachers with immediate access to students' accommodations and modifications. On the teacher homepage and in the grade book, a yellow triangle appears next to each student requiring accommodations and modifications. When teachers hover over this yellow triangle, a pop-up window appears listing all accommodations and modifications. This triangle is available for students with IEPs, students with Section 504 plans, and English Learners (EL).

Special education instruction is provided in small group and one-on-one LiveLesson sessions. Services (when/where/how) are determined by the IEP team. The individualized focus of an online school, along with the small group or one-on-one learning environment, often has a positive impact on students' ability to participate in the general education environment. At least annually, and at each IEP team meeting, IEP teams will consider supplementary aids and services, accommodations, and Extended School Year (ESY) while ensuring the student is educated with nondisabled peers, to the maximum extent possible (LRE), and making expected gains on IEP goals. ESY services will be offered in addition to Pennwood's extended three-week C-Term and will be offered in accordance with federal and state special education regulations.

Assistive Technology (AT) will also be provided according to student needs and evaluation data as determined by the IEP team. Support may include collaboration with support staff, provision of speech-to-text, and text-to-speech. Pennwood will facilitate the provision of text-to-speech and speech-to-text software, screen readers, magnification software, etc., for students with disabilities. In addition, supports for hearing impaired students include closed captioning or American Sign Language during LiveLesson sessions.

Progress Monitoring and Identifying Struggling Students
Intervention Indicators are displayed in the EMS on the Teacher Homepage, to facilitate a teacher's identification of students who may need additional instruction or intervention in math, reading, or both.

These indicators are data-driven codes and are the first step of multi-tiered instruction. The indicators facilitate teachers' abilities to ensure that all students learn at high levels of achievement. Intervention indicator codes are used to identify students who may be at-risk of failure, assist teachers in determining and implementing appropriate instructional interventions, and monitor the effectiveness of interventions.

In addition, at both the section and individual student levels, Student Performance Reports can be generated to identify the student score and the performance against each item. For some courses, objective level performance data is also provided. Teachers can use this data to determine which students need more help with a particular concept. They may then participate in individual or small group tutoring virtually with these students targeting specific skills.

Data can also be used to identify students who have mastered or not mastered specific objectives. Teachers can run this report as frequently as needed to determine how students are progressing regarding each of the skills and standards for that subject and grade.

Students who are working below grade level based on performance on mandated assessments also benefit from intervention programs that focus on building proficiency in reading and math skills. Parents will be notified in the fall if their students qualify for these programs and their cooperation is secured for a series of intensive LiveLesson sessions with the student and his/her teacher focusing on areas needing improvement. The student will continue in the general education curriculum while receiving intervention as the LiveLesson sessions allow for focused remediation on topics likely to be problematic on the next mandated assessment.

The school counseling team will have an established system for early identification of students who are behind in earning high school credits, or those who are off track for graduation. Once students are identified, School Counselors will work with these students to create a graduation recovery plan to identify strategies to successfully earn credits and get back on track to graduate with his/her cohort. School Counselors will work with students and families individually to identify and develop an effective plan to meet the needs of each student.

Multi-tiered System of Support including Response to Intervention
Pennwood will have a Student Support Team (SST) that utilizes a multi-tiered system of support including the Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework, which ensures individual students receive the academic and behavioral support they need. Students who need support beyond the core curriculum with differentiation (Tier I) receive targeted intervention via the supplemental instructional programs in Tier II, and Tier III. Students' responses to interventions are monitored, and adjustments to the type and intensity of support are made as needed. This RTI process is facilitated by data from the EMS to help identify students' instructional needs that may require intervention. The process of identifying student intervention needs, assigning interventions, tracking their success, and communicating with parents, is ongoing. All efforts are made to meet each student's needs within the general education program.

The following paragraphs describe the school's plan to implement tiered instruction and intervention.

Tier I

Tier I is the first level of a multi-tiered approach to a system of instructional and behavioral supports. Tier I includes core reading and math curriculum aligned with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards as well as state mandates on attendance and other behavioral engagement requirements. In addition to core coursework and behavioral expectations, the core curriculum includes teachers' use of differentiated instruction that meets the needs of all students throughout the school year.

All students will have access to the core curriculum; work through their lessons; engage with interactive content such as videos, virtual labs, and manipulatives; engage with teachers and school staff; and demonstrate their understanding through formative assessments such as quizzes, curriculum-based assessments (CBAs), portfolios, quick checks, unit tests to assess skills and standards, and through daily behavioral practices of lesson completion and attendance.

Teachers will use a variety of resources and strategies for instruction and behavior to enhance and extend learning through differentiated and personalized instruction. These instructional tools also allow teachers to fill in skill gaps and extend learning while providing additional evaluative data on student achievement. Differentiation involves thoughtful planning for the following: instructional design used to deliver content to students; lesson content used to support and extend concepts and skills; instructional practice used to provide targeted instruction and actively engage students; assessment used to evaluate student learning; insightful best-practice for engaging in an online classroom, and instructional and behavioral activities to meet the needs of individual and small groups of students. When Tier I differentiation strategies fail to produce adequate progress, Tier II intervention is considered.

Tier II

Areas where students struggle at the Tier I level and require Tier II support may include phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, reading comprehension, math fluency, math computation and reasoning, writing, and behavior. Tier II begins after a general education teacher has attempted a variety of instructional and behavioral supports and differentiation strategies over a four-week period and has documentation showing that the student is not yet responding successfully with strong performance in the identified area of weakness.

Tier II instructional and behavioral support can use many of the same instructional strategies and/or research-based programs that were used for differentiation as part of Tier I; however, it is the increase in the frequency and intensity of use that defines the intervention as Tier II. Tier II intervention is explicit, systematic, and targeted to the greatest area of student learning needs. Frequent and formal logged progress monitoring noting student performance in the EMS is a critical part of the implementation of this tier.

Teachers may elect to assign students a web-based supplemental instructional support program as part of Tier II intervention. These programs provide students with additional instruction and practice in the foundational skills needed to be successful with grade level work and expectations for engagement.

Supplemental programs provide teachers with reports for progress monitoring that can be uploaded to the EMS to ensure all student performance data is in one place. Tier II instructional support will be provided two to three times a week for 20–30 minutes per session. Teachers will use the student's log to document student performance and response to the instructional intervention every two weeks.

Tier III

Tier III includes the most intensive and frequent level of instructional and behavioral support and is the next step in the multi-tiered approach for students who have not been successful in the core curriculum that includes differentiation activities and Tier II supplemental interventions. Tier III interventions are facilitated and monitored by the general education teacher who increases the occurrence of synchronous direct instruction using LiveLesson sessions as well as implements other instructional strategies and research-based programs that are explicit, systematic, and targeted to specific student learning needs.

Students participating in the Tier III level of intervention will receive targeted instruction that is live and teacher driven for four to five days a week in order to focus more intensively on skill deficits and areas of concern. Through Tier III interventions, students may be assigned a personalized course of study that allows for increased learning time in their areas of academic or behavioral need. Teachers will use the student's log to document student performance and response to the intervention every week.

Supporting Student Engagement during Interventions

Learning Coaches, usually a parent, guardian, or responsible adult, have varying levels of skill and previous involvement in their child's education. Pennwood will provide programs and resources to support Learning Coaches to ensure they are effective educational partners. Learning Coaches will be given access to a Learning Coach Orientation course that explains how the program works, demonstrates how to use EMS, and recommends best practices for supporting their students' learning. Further, all Learning Coaches will have access to Learning Coach Central, a website designed specifically for Learning Coaches. Learning Coach Central provides Learning Coaches with access to resources designed to help them navigate the EMS and support them in working with and motivating their students.

Students in grades K-5 will be assigned to a homeroom teacher, and students in grades 6-12 will be assigned an advisory teacher as soon as they are enrolled. (The homeroom teacher is a regular core teacher, and the advisory teacher is a counselor or secondary teacher.) This teacher will work closely with the students and the Learning Coaches to acclimate them to the online learning experience.

Experience has shown that appropriate placement is critical for student success in an online environment so that academic gaps can be addressed immediately. The first step will be the placement process, where students who need additional support are provided with the curriculum materials and teaching resources appropriate to their achievement level as a starting point for learning, with the goal of attaining at least one year's academic progress within the school year.

Teachers will ensure that all students receive the necessary level of support throughout the learning process. Beginning with identified essential skills and standards based on the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, teachers easily see what students should know and be able to do by the end of a specific grade in each of the core area subjects.

Throughout the school year, synchronous webinars are offered several times a month to support Learning Coaches throughout the onboarding process as well as in working with their students. Sample webinar topics have included:

- Helping Your Student Become College and Career Ready
- Supporting Students with Learning Differences
- Embracing Struggle Through a Growth Mindset
- Nurturing Student Motivation and Engagement
- Socialization in Virtual School
- Supporting Your Student with Math
- Practices of Effective Learning Coaches
- Academic Honesty in Virtual Education

The school will provide Learning Coaches with the support and tools to ensure they are successful partners in their child's education and learning. If a Learning Coach or a student is not meeting expectations after the customary support is provided (e.g., attendance is not being recorded, the student is not doing his/her work, or is not being successful), then the teachers of the student will intervene and schedule a conference with the parent and Learning Coach (in instances where the Learning Coach is different from the parent). Clear attendance parameters will be communicated to all stakeholders. Our goal is for all students to be successful in an online learning environment, and we will work with the families to find the option that best meets their unique family needs.

In addition to the direct support from the homeroom teacher, the Manager of Engagement and Student Engagement Specialists will ensure students are meeting the state's Compulsory Attendance requirements and actively engaged throughout the school year.

Ensuring Retention of Special Education Students

Student retention begins with outreach to families via early welcome calls to acclimate the whole family to the virtual learning environment. During this welcome call, teachers will talk to the student and parent or guardian and prepare them for the first day of school.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will offer an annual student orientation course for all students enrolled in the school. Additionally, the school will notify all students and their parents/guardians in a timely manner that they can participate in the student orientation. Assigning orientation courses to both students and parents/guardians promotes retention and early engagement. Data shows that if parents and students complete these orientations, the students are more successful in a cyber learning environment. Teachers closely monitor completion of the courses.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will also offer back-to-school LiveLesson (synchronous online) sessions. These sessions provide a chance for teachers to introduce themselves and explain the expectations of their class to the students and parents. These sessions will be recorded and posted to message boards for students who enroll late.

In addition, Special Education students will be assigned a case manager. The case manager will conduct frequent contacts via phone, webmail, or other methods agreed upon by the student and parent. The purpose of frequent contacts is to confirm that students are on track with their learning plan, address any concerns including technical issues, and schedule an IEP Team meeting, as needed, to determine next steps to ensure the student continues to make progress.

Student Services Staff

Pennwood Cyber Charter School plans to contract with Pearson, an Educational Services Provider (ESP), through the Statement of Agreement, for consultation on the development and implementation of a special education program that will govern the manner in which special education services are provided and which shall be in compliance with federal and state special education regulations and statutes. The ESP has extensive experience in working with states on ensuring students with disabilities are well-served in a virtual environment. The agreement between the Board and ESP will ensure that the school operates in compliance with all Pennsylvania and federal regulations, as well as ensure data is being collected, stored, and updated in a manner that meets all compliance expectations.

The Pennwood CEO, an employee of the board, will manage teachers as they teach students and consult regularly with Learning Coaches, ensuring that each student — including those with exceptionalities — successfully completes his/her instructional program. The CEO is responsible for overall school operation working with parents, students, staff, and teachers. The CEO, whose primary responsibility will be administering the instructional program, will have an administrative credential and be certified according to applicable law.

Director of Special Education Role

The Director of Special Education will work collaboratively with the CEO. The Director will manage all of the site-based, school operations. Additionally, the Director will work closely with the enrollment, technical support, materials management, fulfillment, finance, human resources, payroll, and facilities management functions. The Director will help the CEO with implementation of the instructional program, including managing staff members. The Director will manage an Assistant Director of Special Education and all Special Education teachers.

The Director of Special Education will oversee all aspects of the special education program at the school, ensuring compliance with all state and federal rules and regulations. The Director Special Education provides leadership and guidance to Special Education Teachers in all areas of special education, including alternative education, related services, and assistive technology. The Director of Special Education will monitor compliance items related to IEPs using the EMS and other data reporting tools and will build capacity in Special Education Teachers to develop and maintain a robust specially designed instructional program.

Other Staff Roles

Certified Special Education Teachers, who will also implement IEP case management tasks, will teach and manage instructional programs for students with learning or cognitive disabilities. Special Education Teachers will consult regularly with Learning Coaches and students to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Special Education Teachers will participate in all steps of the IEP process. They will work closely with other teachers and district/state professionals to ensure that the school's special education program is successful and operating in compliance with federal and state regulations.

Certified teachers will teach students in grades K-12 and support the instructional programs. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Pennwood will use Pennsylvania-certificated teachers for all core subjects as well as certificated teachers for elective courses. Teachers will be trained to provide classroom modifications and accommodations and are expected to be active participants in IEP and Section 504 planning and reviews.

The Director of Counseling will work with the leadership team to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. The Director, working with the Assistant Manager of Counseling, Advisory Teachers and Counselors will assist students and parents in understanding and meeting graduation requirements, course selection and scheduling, post-secondary school planning, social/emotional needs, and crisis intervention.

The School Counselors and Advisory Teachers will assist students and Learning Coaches with course selection and scheduling and will be the initial point of contact for student concerns that span multiple subject areas as well as non-academic issues. The School Counselors and Advisory Teachers will become an expert on course and credit requirements as well as establishing counseling processes.

A Coordinator for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or Section 504 Coordinator, will be assigned, in conjunction with the 504 team, to support all students with a Section 504 plan. This position may be an added role to a teacher who is qualified to complete Section 504 tasks. The Section 504 Coordinator may also coordinate SAT tasks. The role of the Section 504 Coordinator is to facilitate initial evaluations for Section 504 plan, to monitor and implement individual students' Section 504 plan, which will include but will not be limited to scheduling meetings, checking the progress of students as 504 accommodations are implemented, and informing all teachers of students' accommodations.

Most of the related services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and psychological services, will be provided online and will be contracted with professionals that are qualified to provide related services in the state of Pennsylvania.

Pennwood will offer Live Speech™, a program that provides full- and part-time Speech Language Pathologists online. In cases where a student is not making progress with online speech services, the IEP team can determine if face-to-face services are more appropriate. In those cases, a services provider located near the student's home will be contracted to provide services in a mutually agreed upon location.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will utilize physical space for providing services to special education students as needed and determined by the local IEP team. The school plans to use locally available locations, such as libraries, hotel conference rooms, or similar places to provide such services. Services can also be provided at home. The local IEP team will discuss and decide on a case-by-case basis. In addition, the school will also have a administrative facility where students can meet with teachers as needed and in a manner consistent with Department guidelines relating to cyber charter schools' use of physical facilities.

Number and Type of Special Education Programs

Accelerated and Enrichment Opportunities

Students that require accelerated and enrichment learning opportunities are a diverse subsection of the general student body and thereby require additional educational opportunities for the fulfillment of their exceptional potentials. Although Pennwood Cyber Charter School is not required to provide gifted services under 22 Pa. Code § 16, it will offer a comprehensive education program, which recognizes students who require accelerated and enriched learning and their unique needs. The school will challenge the student, provide expanded learning opportunities, and support the student's affective needs.

Utilizing a multiple criteria approach, students will be identified through both quantitative and qualitative measures of performance.

The identification process can begin during the enrollment process. The parent has the option to indicate their interest in accelerated learning opportunities and provide supporting documentation. If documentation is provided during enrollment, the student is placed in classes accordingly. Screening for students once they are enrolled will involve a multi-level approach to identifying who exhibits exceptional performance or potential. Indicators such as parent recommendation, exceptional test scores, classroom performance, and teacher recommendations will be used to determine student course placement. At least one of the following will be used for screening:

- Recommendation by parent, Learning Coach, or teacher;
- Anecdotal notes that indicate exceptional performance or potential;
- Gifted Individualized Education Plan or recommendation from the student's prior school;

- School and district administered assessments;

- Classroom performance and student portfolios;

- Nationally normed aptitude and achievement data (e.g., Advanced performance on the PSSA);

- Benchmark tests; and

- Placement test results.

An essential part of the screening process will be nominations. These nominations will be completed at any point of the year, with predesignated testing and evaluation windows determining admittance and processing of nominations. Once submitted, the nomination will then be evaluated by a staff member who will collect evidence before then considering the student for formal evaluation.

At least three of the following are used for referral for formal evaluation:

- Completed nomination by either the parent and/or Learning Coach or teacher of the student,

- School and district administered assessments,

- Classroom performance and student portfolios that exhibit above grade-level performance,

- Nationally normed aptitude and achievement data,

- Placement test results, and/or

- Patterns of growth or upward trajectories over time based on formal and informal data.

Upon referral, students will undergo a formal evaluation process. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will use both quantitative and qualitative evidence to determine whether accelerated coursework and enrichment activities are in the best interest of the student. The following criteria will also be used to justify access to additional programs:

- Nationally normed and validated achievement tests that demonstrate a year or more above grade level achievement for the normed age group;

- Observed or measured demonstration of rapid acquisition of new knowledge;

- Work portfolios that demonstrate achievement, performance, or expertise in one or more academic areas;

- Observed or measured demonstrations of exceptional leadership ability, creative thinking, foreign language aptitude, communication skills or technology expertise;

- Placement test results; and

- Completed nominations by either the parent or Learning Coach or teacher of the student.

Furthermore, in recognition of the importance of equal access to education programming, all formal evaluations will take into account possible confounding variables in the evaluation such as English as a second language, disabilities as defined in 34 CFR 300.8 (relating to child with a disability), gender or race bias, and/or socio/cultural factors that may influence performance. Once identified, a personalized learning plan will be developed for each identified student. The personalized learning plan will be developed by a team of members including one or both of the student's parents, the Learning Coach, the student if the parent chooses to have the student participate, the guidance counselor, one or more of the student's current teachers, and other individuals that may contribute to the formulation of the personalized learning plan. Clear communication of the purpose, time, location, and persons expected to attend will be provided to all members of the team.

In review of the students' interests and needs for acceleration, a plan may contain the following:

- Statement of the student's present levels of educational performance,

- Statement of annual goals and short-term learning outcomes,

- Statement of the specially designed instruction and support services to be provided to the student,

- Projected dates for initiation,

- Anticipated frequency of interventions,

- Objective criteria and process for determining progress,

All teachers who work with the student will be notified of the student's educational needs and goals and will be provided guidance in its reaching those goals.

Students identified as requiring accelerated and enrichment learning opportunities will be enrolled in curriculum that is attuned to the specific needs of the child. In grades 3-8, students will have the opportunity to enroll in Accelerated courses in math, science, and English Language Arts. These courses will allow students greater opportunities to interact with the teacher and other students, explore grade-level content, participate in extension projects, investigations, and activities that integrate skills and promote higher- level thinking, and to participate in individualized activities. Students will also be able to choose from a wide variety of electives and club activities to supplement learning in core subjects. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will also offer an exclusive online version of Junior Great Books® where students will enjoy age-appropriate works and participate in online literary inquiry discussions with other high-ability students.

Identified high school students requiring accelerated and enrichment learning opportunities will also have access to rigorous college preparatory curriculum and will be able to choose from dozens of Honors courses and 13 Advanced Placement® (AP) courses. Honors courses will offer advanced students opportunities to participate in extension projects, investigations, and activities that require integrated skills application and higher-level thinking. Furthermore, AP courses will allow students to engage in college-level investigation of subjects with the opportunity to earn college credit by achieving high scores on AP exams.

Along with the provision of advanced courses, Pennwood will offer a level of flexibility that will make it possible to provide each and every student a course load that is attuned to their particular strengths and interests. During the enrollment and placement process, students seeking enrichment and accelerated placements, may be placed in different curriculum levels for different subjects. For example, a sixth grader with a high aptitude in math could be placed in an eighth-grade math course, while continuing to take sixth grade level courses in other subjects. This level of flexibility will allow Pennwood Cyber Charter School to provide an impressive level of personalization for the accelerated student.

In recognition of the fact that high-quality staff is essential to a strong education program, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide professional learning on accelerated programming to all teachers, counselors, and administrators. These courses will cover topics ranging from affective education to student identification and will ensure that staff is well versed in the needs of every student.

Academically or intellectually gifted students will thrive at Pennwood Cyber Charter School. The ability for customization and individual programming and pacing in grade 3-9 and the Honors/AP program for high school students, along with a flexible placement system will ensure students are provided the services required for the realization of their exceptional potentials. Furthermore, teachers will work closely with Learning Coaches to ensure a steady flow of enrichment activities for students working above grade level.

Number and Type of Related Services

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will ensure that the delivery of related services includes but is not limited to:

- Speech-language services,
- Occupational therapy,
- Counseling services,
- Social work services,
- Behavior therapy,
- Special transportation,
- Physical therapy,
- Audiology services,
- Social skills,
- Autism support,
- Parent training,
- Orientation and mobility,
- Closed-captioning, and
- American Sign Language translation

Related services will be equally accessible to all students in Pennsylvania, whether attending face-to-face or virtually. As determined by the IEP team, the student may receive these services in a cyber setting and/or face-to-face. Services will be provided face-to-face at the providers' locations, via computer, in homes, community sites, and medical offices. As mentioned in prior sections, decisions as to the location of service delivery will be made during the IEP team meeting with input from the parents of the student.

Students attending other cyber schools in Pennsylvania have been receiving services in both settings for many years. When the IEP team determines that the services will be provided face-to-face, the services will be provided at a mutually convenient location for both the family and the provider. Options for locations include the student's home, the therapist's business location, libraries, community centers, and so forth. For services provided outside of the home, special transportation will be provided or the parent may choose to receive mileage reimbursement for transporting their child. In Appendix C, relevant information on contractors that the ESP has utilized during 2021-22 in support of public cyber schools is provided. As evidenced in Appendix C, Pennwood will provide related services by engaging intermediate units, private businesses, agencies, hospitals, adult service providers, and any other acceptable providers. For each provider serving enrolled students, Pennwood will maintain copies of licensure and certification, background checks, etc. consistent with Pennsylvania law.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology (AT) may also be provided according to students' needs and evaluation data. Support may include collaboration with support staff, provision of speech-to-text, and text-to-speech. Pennwood will facilitate the provision of text-to-speech and speech-to-text software, screen readers, magnification software, etc., for students with disabilities. In addition, supports for hearing impaired students include closed captioning or American Sign Language during LiveLesson sessions.

IEP Progress Reporting

Student progress on annual goals and objectives will be monitored regularly using a variety of tools. The data will be summarized and provided to parents quarterly throughout the school year, unless the IEP team agrees upon more frequent updates. Data collection tools may include rubric scores, curriculum-

based assessments, tests, portfolios or fluency and accuracy probes. Data may also be accumulated during small group or one on one instruction. Teachers will chart the data collected and analyze the data points weekly to ensure the student is on track to meet the goal by the annual IEP due date. If the student is not making expected progress on the annual goals or objectives, instructional adjustments will be made accordingly in an effort to increase progress, such as increased repetition opportunities or the re-teaching of critical skills. Related service goals will also be regularly monitored, and a summary included in the quarterly report provided to parents.

State Testing

All students will be expected to participate in appropriate grade level state testing assessments. Students with an IEP in grades 3-8 will take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) with accommodations (outlined in the Pennsylvania Accommodations Guidelines) to be determined by the IEP team. For students in high school with an IEP, Keystone Exams in the areas of Algebra 1, Literature, and Biology will be administered with allowable accommodations to be determined by the IEP team. The IEP Team may determine some students are eligible to take the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) in grades 3-8 and 11, rather than the PSSA or Keystone Exams. These will typically be students with significant intellectual disabilities who have met the six eligibility criteria. Allowable exceptions will be considered for students identified as English Learners for all required state testing assessments. All teachers and administrators administering state assessments will be thoroughly trained in test security, roles, responsibilities, chain of custody of the testing materials, and penalties of violations.

Students unable to exhibit proficiency on the Keystones exams will participate in school-led supplemental instructional services in their academic area of need. If the student is still unable to pass the Keystone Exam, they may complete a Project Based Assessment (PBA) that corresponds with the content of the specific Keystone Exam module. Determining eligibility for the PBA will be based on the PDE Keystone Guidelines.

English Learners (EL)

An EL Lead Teacher will implement the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP®) as the framework for language acquisition lesson designed for direct instruction to ELs. Teachers will participate in professional development sessions to increase their knowledge of practice and implementation of this instructional model. The SIOP® framework will ensure that teachers design lessons to make grade level content accessible for ELs while developing their academic language skills in content area classes. ELs will be provided with additional supplementary instructional support software and progress monitoring throughout the school year. The school will also have access to a TESOL-certified EL expert who will support the school and its efforts to identify and educate EL students in the virtual environment. There will be a teacher at the school who will be designated the EL Lead and will work closely with the EL expert.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will utilize the third edition of Pearson's New Cornerstone and New Keystone as the basis for its EL instructional curriculum. Once identified as an EL, a student will receive support based on English proficiency via LiveLesson sessions by a certified EL teacher. Instruction will be aligned to standards based on scientific research for English acquisition in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Pennwood will designate one of the EL teachers as the EL Lead Teacher, who will work with content teachers, Learning Coaches, and students to ensure material is adapted and accessible for all ELs. The EL Lead Teacher will maintain student files, consult with Learning Coaches, provide direct

instruction to ELs via LiveLesson sessions and telephone calls, conduct progress monitoring throughout the school year, create and implement targeted interventions based on the data from progress monitoring, monitor exited ELs for academic progress using state-specific criteria, and comply with state and federal law pertaining to ELs. Pennwood Cyber Charter School staff will have access to Pearson's EL experts who will support the school and its efforts to identify and educate English Learners.

Identifying English Learners

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow state procedures and will use required criteria and procedures to identify ELs. Incoming families will complete the Home Language Survey (HLS) that includes questions such as those below and will be retained in the student's record.

- Is a language other than English spoken in the child's home?

- Does your child communicate in a language other than English?

- What is the language that your child first learned to speak?

If the HLS indicates a response to any questions that a language other than English is used, the student will be considered as a potential English learner until the English proficiency assessment is completed. Every student who answered "yes" to one of the HLS questions will also have cumulative records reviewed to determine any prior EL instruction and services. Additionally, a family interview will be completed by Pennwood Cyber Charter. In order to identify if a student qualifies as an EL, the school will use a screener: Kindergarten W-APT and WIDA Screener (Online or Paper) for grades 1-12 to assist in the identification of students who may be ELs. Pennwood will notify parents/guardians of the initial screening results and program placement decisions within 30 days of the beginning of the school year or within two weeks if the student enrolls during the school year. If there is a delay in assessing the student, this will be documented in the student's file to include the reason for the delay, evidence that the student is accorded the programming required for ELs pending the delay, and a specific timetable for completing the assessment. This documentation will be mailed to the parents in the language they understand. A copy will be retained in the student's files.

Pennwood will consider at least two of the following criteria in addition to the language assessment scores to develop a plan for each EL, often called the Individualized Language Plan (ILP):

- Extent and nature of prior educational or academic experience, social experience, and/or a student interview;

- Recommendations and observations by current and previous instructional and supportive services staff;

- Level of mastery of basic competencies or skills in English and native language according to local, state or national criterion-referenced standards;

- Grades from the current or previous years; or

- Other assessment results.

Any determinations by the EL Committee (recommended participants are the EL Lead Teacher, parent and general education teacher—preferably the Language Arts teacher) will be contained in a written evaluation with a narrative description of the basis for the decision and will be placed in the ILP. The ILP will be implemented to address the student's English language needs and will be maintained in the student's file.

Each student identified as EL will be further assessed in academic areas to aid the student's teachers in developing an appropriate instructional program. Pennwood will take previous experiences into account in planning and providing appropriate instruction to such students. Students with an EL classification will be placed in the appropriate English Language Arts course and core subject area courses based on their assigned grade level.

Any teacher, administrator, parent, or parent's designee may request a review of the student's progress in attaining necessary subject area competencies or in overcoming persistent deficiencies in overall student performance. The EL Lead will make initial recommendations for appropriate accommodations in the student's programming to address problems identified and will document such accommodations in the student's ILP. Pennwood will also inform parents of the rights to opt out of EL services. Although parents may choose for their student not to participate in the language programs, Pennwood will still be required to ensure that the students' language and academic needs are being met. The school will have the EL Lead explain to the parent, in a language parents understand:

- The range of language programs and services that the child could receive, the methodology Pennwood plans to employ to address the student's educational needs and the qualifications of teachers and any others who would be employed in teaching the student;

- The benefits likely to be gained by being enrolled in an EL program and receiving services;

- Pennwood Cyber Charter School will not require students to be assigned to programs specifically designated for ELs, or schools containing such programs, in order to receive EL services; and

- All students who qualify for but opt out of EL services must still participate in the annual EL assessment until they meet the state-required exit criteria.

<u>Ensuring English Learners Have Equitable Access</u>

Once identified as an EL, a student will receive support based on English proficiency via LiveLesson sessions by a certified EL teacher. Instruction will be aligned to standards grounded on scientific research for English acquisition in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Pennwood will designate an EL Lead Teacher, who will work with content teachers, Learning Coaches, and students to ensure material is adapted and accessible for all EL students. The EL Lead Teacher will maintain student files, consult with Learning Coaches, provide direct instruction to EL students via LiveLesson sessions and telephone calls, conduct progress monitoring throughout the school year, create and implement targeted interventions based on the data from progress monitoring, monitor exited EL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria, and comply with state and federal law pertaining to EL students.

Pennwood staff will have access to Pearson's EL experts who will support the school and its efforts to identify and educate EL students. All EL students will participate in the state's annual language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELs®. The English proficiency annual assessment takes place in spring. The EL teacher will coordinate in-person testing of EL students at various locations across the state within the established timeframe for Pennsylvania. These annual test results will help determine continued program placement and allow teachers to adapt content to individual student needs. All mandated state tests will be administered to EL students as required by law.

Communicating with English Learners' Families

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide parent notifications both in English and in the parent's preferred language, upon request, to the extent feasible. Pennwood will continue to notify parents/guardians of the assessment results annually and continued participation in or exit from the EL program.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Progress and Success of EL Students

When a student demonstrates proficiency, a school-based team consisting of the EL Lead Teacher, student's content teachers, and the parent/guardian will decide whether the student continues to require EL instruction. Multiple factors are considered, including current ACCESS for ELs®, or other state-required annual assessment testing results, academic performance, state test results, teacher feedback, and parental input.

If the team determines that the student is English proficient and can successfully perform in classes without significant language support, they will be reclassified and moved to the monitoring stage. The school will monitor EL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria for two years after exiting the program.

Additional supports are provided as deemed necessary. For example, for re-designated elementary grade students, the school's EL team pays particular attention to students flagged for Tier II and Tier III interventions. For re-designated students in middle school and high school, the EL team pays particular attention to the list of students who are in "escalation" status.

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

Teaching Methods

An individualized and supported educational program facilitates the development of self-direction and personal responsibility among its students. Through the chosen instructional model, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will develop students who are self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners. The instructional model focuses on student-centered learning and incorporates key facets, including multiple sources of guidance and support, and teaching methods to foster student motivation.
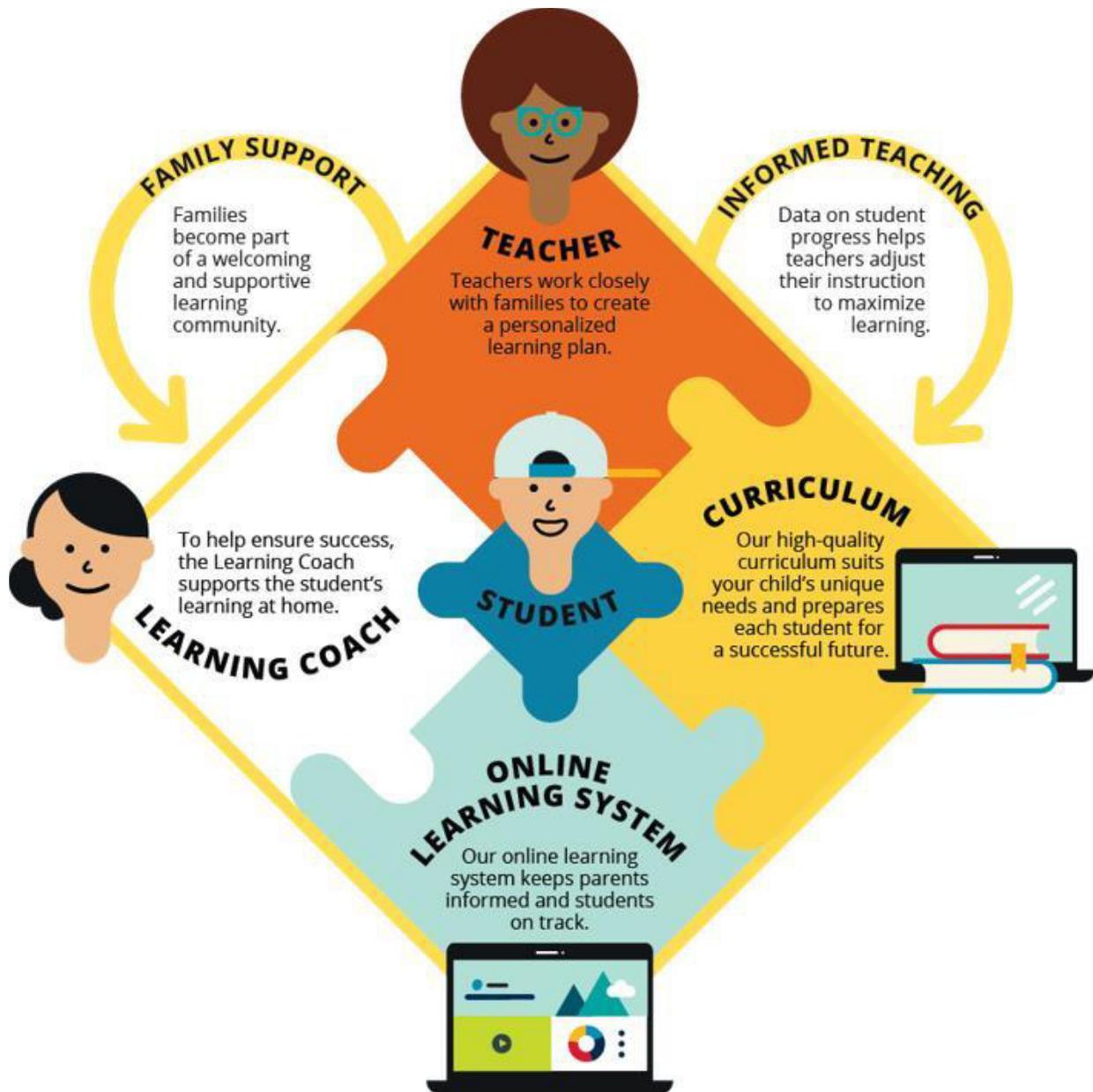
Figure 9. The instructional model creates a wrap-around support network for student learning.

Multiple Sources of Guidance and Support: The instructional model relies on the support of certified teachers, supportive Learning Coaches, and a high quality, standards-aligned curriculum. Each student will have a staff of experts, including Pennsylvania-certified teachers, working together to leverage the school's myriad of resources — technological, instructional, and interpersonal — for success. Learning Coaches are also encouraged to, and typically function as, an integral part of the student's learning team.

Certified Teachers – Students benefit from committed educators and involved parents who provide total support. Each student will have one or more certified Pennsylvania teachers depending on grade level, specially trained in teaching in an online environment, the Pearson curriculum, and specific instructional methods.
Students will be taught by a certified teacher with expertise in a particular grade level or content area.

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

Teachers will work closely with each student on a one-on-one basis using innovative technology tools. The teacher will be responsible for teaching, evaluating assignments and work products, providing instructional assistance, assigning and scoring assessment activities, and providing feedback on the student's performance.

Based on a student's demonstrated mastery of the material, teachers will add, expand, or replace assignments; they will also grade students in each subject, and make promotion or retention decisions. Depending on the needs of the learner, teacher direct contact — via telephone, LiveLesson session, and email — with the student and Learning Coach may be as frequent as several times a day, and at minimum twice per week. Teachers view the students' attendance, participation, and performance on a daily basis via the EMS teacher's dashboard on their home page. Teachers will not wait to be contacted; they will be proactive participants in their students' learning plans. Teachers in cyber schools often comment that they understand their students better in the virtual environment than in a traditional classroom since they work with students one-on-one.

Counselors – Students in middle school and high school will be assigned a counselor who provides an extra layer of monitoring for the whole student. Teachers will work directly with students via the phone, email, and LiveLesson sessions. Student academic progress will be tracked on a daily basis via online discussions, quizzes, tests, science labs, and portfolio items to ascertain mastery of the material.

Advisory Teachers – Secondary students in grades 6-12 are assigned advisory teachers upon enrollment.

These certified teachers will work closely with the students and the Learning Coaches to acclimate them to the online learning experience. They will observe all aspects of a student's success: their grades, their attendance, and their engagement in course work. If a student is struggling in a course, the advisory teacher will work with the subject-specific teacher to make sure the student gets the support they need.

Supportive Learning Coaches – Each student has a Learning Coach (a parent, extended family member, or trusted adult designated by the parent/guardian) who is encouraged to work in person with the student. Typically, a Learning Coach helps keep students motivated and on track and regularly communicates with the students' Pennsylvania-certified teachers. At the high school level, the Learning Coach is less involved with daily instruction but is encouraged to continue serving as an important supervisory role for the student.

A High Quality, Standards-Aligned Curriculum – The Pearson curriculum is aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The developmentally appropriate curriculum increases its integration of technology as students advance through the grades.

Student Motivation: Teachers are trained to apply the following three engagement strategies to their instruction to create a motivational online learning environment: make instruction fun and engaging, provide a safe way to respond, and help students succeed.

The school will employ a multi-tiered instruction model so that every student has access to the resources they need to be successful: Tier I Core Curriculum with Differentiation, Tier II Supplemental Instructional Supports (two to three times per week), and Tier III Supplemental Instructional Supports (four to five times per week). Student Support and IEP teams will meet regularly to develop an intervention plan and strategies for improvement for students who are struggling.

Pennwood will utilize a proven program, which provides a full-time, online asynchronous model that uses synchronous support. In synchronous learning, students and teachers work together at the same time in the same virtual place via LiveLesson rooms. Typical synchronous instruction involves teacher-facilitated lessons, targeted small group lessons to teach difficult concepts, group projects, and class discussions. The school will incorporate synchronous instruction in its lessons for the following reasons:

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate their knowledge and practice their communication skills
- Ask questions to deepen their understanding
- Build relationships with their teacher and fellow classmates

Teachers will be able to:

- Engage students in discussions, problem solving, and group projects
- Focus class time on bridging skills gaps
- Build more personal relationships with students

In the asynchronous element of the model, students work at their own pace and place, completing coursework within defined time limits. Schoolwork that students perform on their own time typically includes:

- Viewing pre-recorded online classroom sessions at home;
- Reviewing course materials online or offline;
- Completing lessons and course assessments; and
- Collaborating with other students via secure message and discussion boards.

There are many benefits to asynchronous learning. Through asynchronous instruction and materials, students are provided the flexibility to:

- Learn at their own pace and place at a time best suited for them;
- Work at their own academic level within a specific time frame (which may vary by course), moving as quickly or slowly through course content as needed;
- Review challenging content as needed; and
- Explore supplemental resources that may be unavailable in the traditional classroom.

Some students thrive with one-on-one attention while others crave the space to work through problems independently at their own pace. Offering a combination of the two learning approaches allows Pennwood to create a more personalized learning experience that supports different learning preferences. Together, these two approaches provide teachers and students the best of real-time and any-time learning.

How Pedagogy Will Enhance Student Learning

The centerpiece of instruction at Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be the Personalized Performance Learning (PPL) process, which provides for individualized instruction tailored to the learning needs of each student. The PPL is an extensive process that will start at the beginning of the school year by the Pennsylvania-credentialed teacher in consultation with the student and the student's Learning Coach (usually the parents/guardians). The PPL process builds from a combination of assessment data using the Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs), Renaissance STAR assessments, information gathered from the Learning Coach, and input directly from the student. Learning needs that go beyond the purely academic (such as study habits and interpersonal skills) are addressed in the process as well. All daily lessons will be provided to students and families online. Learning Coach guides will be provided for grades K-5. Lessons direct students step-by-step through use of the comprehensive set of textbooks, trade books, manipulatives, and consumables that are shipped to them or provided online.

Throughout the year, teachers monitor students' progress through the PPL process. Teachers adjust their learning programs to focus on areas where students need to improve and areas in which they can build on their strengths.

This process includes:

- **Placement and Course Selection.** Starting at the time of placement and course assignment, information given during the enrollment process or provided by the prior school will be used to select courses based on state requirements and each student's individual learning needs.

- **Regular Communication.** At the start of school, Learning Coaches and teachers establish a regular communication schedule, at least once every two weeks with students. Teachers review progress daily and communicate frequently with students and Learning Coaches (as appropriate). Students are encouraged to contact their teachers as often as they wish or find necessary.

- **Review of Student Background and Interests**. Teachers meet with parents/guardians and/or Learning Coaches as well as students to discuss students' strengths, interests, learning preferences and previous school performance data during Welcome Calls.

- **Universal Screening.** The Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) are online assessments designed to provide teachers with valuable diagnostic information to guide and differentiate instruction. The CDT reports provide a snapshot of how students are performing in relation to the Standards Aligned System (SAS) and help identify student academic strengths and areas in need of improvement. Educators receive links to curricular resources and materials that align to the Learning Progression Map. The untimed, computer-adaptive assessments focus on Literacy, Mathematics, or Science and include approximately 48-60 items.

- **Student Engagement and Performance.** In addition to universal screening tools, teachers regularly review student performance and engagement data including lesson pacing, course performance, and curriculum-based assessments to ensure that students are achieving success in their courses and can meet the demands of the online learning environment. Students who are not able to remain on track with student engagement and performance metrics may be identified as in need of interventions to support their individualized needs. For additional oversight and to ensure that truancy mitigation needs are in place, students may be assigned a Student Engagement Specialist who will work with the family to identify barriers. Should it be deemed necessary, the Student Engagement Specialist will conduct a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) and implement a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). If necessary, the Student Engagement Specialist, in consultation with the Manager of Engagement may determine a referral to a local agency, or even the District Magistrate is necessary in accordance with applicable state law and the Board approved Truancy Elimination Policy.

- **Performance Testing.** Students in grades K–12 will take the Renaissance Star tests for both English Language Arts/Reading and Math. Star Reading transforms assessment data into action steps for educators, giving teachers helpful insights and tools to strengthen classroom instruction. Star Math tracks progress over time—throughout the school year and from grade to grade—as students respond to instruction and intervention. These tests identify areas of strength and need in the student's learning profile and measures student growth during the school year to help formulate learning goals and monitor student progress. These assessments align with state standards as well as the curriculum and will be given to students in the fall, winter, and spring.

- **Setting Goals**. Goal setting is based on the information gathered in the initial process and some initial student work samples. Teachers and students work together to set goals and to accomplish these during the school year. Learning Coaches participate in goal setting discussions as well.

- **Schedule Modifications and Electives.** Once the school year starts, teachers help personalize the learning schedule. For students in grades K-8, teachers inquire about the student's daily routines and make adjustments to the student's online learning schedule. They also add an elective course when students are ready to handle the additional challenge.

- **Differentiated Leveled Courses**. As part of a student's personalized performance learning process, teachers or Academic Placement Advisors may recommend that students in grades 3-8 who are needing additional support take Essential level courses, and that students needing higher level work have access to Accelerated mathematics, English Language Arts, and science courses. For grades 9-12, students needing additional support may take Foundations level courses. Those students needing a higher level of challenge may take Honors or Advanced Placement® courses.

The EMS places at each teacher's fingertips all assessment data available for students, e.g., state test scores, Renaissance Star assessment data, participation and performance metrics, and any IEP information.

Another way to differentiate instruction is enabled through Intervention Indicators. Intervention Indicators are displayed in the EMS to facilitate a teacher's identification of students who may need additional instruction or intervention in math, reading, or both. Additionally, teachers can run performance reports through the EMS, as described previously. This method accomplishes the following:

- Enhances the multitiered instruction model;

- Identifies essential skills and standards by subject/grade level;

- Identifies how and where these essential skills and standards are assessed within the program;

- Provides a Response to Intervention model;

- Provides access to and analysis of real-time data to determine mastery/proficiency;

- Incorporates data-driven decisions throughout instruction;

    Maximizes use of the instructional support programs, resources, and data;

    Identifies the need for tiered interventions for non-mastered/proficient skills and standards; and

    Identifies students' response to the implemented interventions.

School Staff

The school's staff will be comprised of Pennsylvania-credentialed teachers. Teachers will work remotely to deliver instruction to an online classroom of students and work one-on-one with students through highly interactive, technology-facilitated communication tools and quality timely feedback on assignments. Teachers will be specially trained in Internet-based instruction and will hold certifications and credentials in Pennsylvania for the subjects they teach.

Students will benefit from this expertise as the teacher will offer a variety of synchronous support via LiveLesson® Sessions, Curriculum-Based Assessments, Teacher Time Sessions, Literacy Sessions (K-2), and Targeted Small Group Intervention Sessions.

School staff will include Special Education and English Learner instructors. Special Education teachers will teach students with learning or cognitive disabilities as well as providing IEP supports for Students with behavioral, social and emotional disabilities, and manage instructional programs for students with learning or cognitive disabilities and behavioral, social and emotional disabilities. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches and students and other members of the IEP Team to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Special Education teachers will participate in all steps of the IEP process. They will work closely with other teachers and state educational professionals to ensure that the school's special education program is successful and operating in compliance with federal and state regulations. The Special Education teacher will utilize technology to deliver online instruction and teach students. Qualifications include a degree in Special Education or related education field; valid Special Education credential in Pennsylvania; experience in policy (IDEA) and/or administration with Special Education; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; and willingness to travel on occasion for outreach and state testing events (may require occasional overnight travel).

The school will provide high quality student support services for special education and Section 504 students. A Coordinator for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or Section 504 Coordinator, will be assigned to support all students with a Section 504 plan. The Section 504 Coordinator may also coordinate SAT tasks. The role of the Section 504 Coordinator is to coordinate with the Special Education and regular education teams to monitor and implement individual students' Section 504 plan, which will include but will not be limited to scheduling meetings, checking the progress of students as Section 504 accommodations and eligible modifications are implemented, and informing all teachers of students' accommodations and eligible modifications.

The school will employ a Director of Special Education and an Assistant Director of Special Education, in the first year, who will work closely together to develop and implement Special Education services. The Assistant Director of Special Education will support students with a Section 504 plan in the first year, and then a dedicated Section 504 Coordinator will be hired as the student population increases.

The Director of Special Education and the Assistant Director of Special Education will be responsible for reviewing the student's documentation (IEP and Evaluation Report), if available during the enrollment process, and recommend course placement. After enrollment, school staff will coordinate to convene an IEP team meeting with the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), to adopt or amend the student's IEP to reflect the virtual environment.

The Special Education Teachers will work closely with the school's regular education teachers to ensure that every student receives accommodations, and all needed services to access and progress in the general education curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) according to their respective agreed upon IEPs. Provision of IEP-specified accommodations will be documented in each student's account in the EMS. Decisions about the location of services will be made by the IEP team.

EL teachers will maintain student files, screen new students for eligibility of EL services, provide instructional consultation to Learning Coaches, provide direct instruction to EL students via LiveLesson sessions and phone calls, coordinate instructional planning and evaluation with the core content teachers to provide meaningful access to instruction in all content areas, conduct progress monitoring throughout the school year, create and implement targeted interventions based on data from progress monitoring, administer the annual EL assessment, monitor exited EL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria for two years, and stay current on state legislation pertaining to EL students. Qualifications include being qualified to teach English Learners (appropriate to grade level responsibilities) in Pennsylvania; ESOL endorsement or certification required; experience directly teaching English Learners; bilingual preferred; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills,

both oral and written; willingness to travel for school-based meetings, trainings, outreach and state testing events; ability to work remotely; and ability to work some occasional evening hours, as needed to support some families.

Every student will be assigned a credentialed school counselor who provides an extra layer of monitoring that focuses on the whole child. This educator, in collaboration with the Learning Coach, develops graduation plans for each student, and closely tracks the student's overall academic progress. Counselors work with students via the phone, email, and LiveLesson sessions. Other parameters of student success, such as attendance and participation, are also tracked regularly. The student's school counselor provides support in academic, personal social, and college and career readiness.

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

School Calendar

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will exceed the requirements of Section 1715-A(9), *"A charter school shall provide a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction or nine hundred (900) hours per year of instruction at the elementary level, or nine hundred ninety (990) hours per year of instruction at the secondary level. Nothing in this clause shall preclude the use of computer and satellite linkages for delivering instruction to students."*

Students will complete 195 instructional days. This will include the traditional 180-day calendar, and an additional 15-day term outlined in previous sections as the C-Term. This interim session will be mandatory for all students. During this term, on track students in grades K-12 will earn Career Competency Badges for completing activities aligned to Pennsylvania's Career Education and Work standards. Students in grades K-8 who are behind academically, will receive remediation in English Language Arts and Math. Students in grades 9-12, who are behind in credits based on their cohort, will be offered credit recovery courses. All students, who are on-track academically, will also receive test preparation coursework designed to prepare students for the upcoming PSSA and Keystone exams. The Board will approve the school calendar annually. In keeping with Pennsylvania school calendar regulations, the school will not be kept open on Sundays, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, the first of January, Martin Luther King Jr Day, Christmas, or Saturdays. In some instances, Monday may be the designated observance of a holiday.

Please note that the sample student and teacher schedules will include badging components as part of the educational program.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School Calendar

Note: The School Status Legend below the calendar reflects the possible school statuses for each event. All events which show a status of School In Session indicates they are school days for students. All events which show any other status indicates they are NOT school days for students. Please refer to the legend to determine whether teachers and/or administrator staff are available for each event according to its status.

Total Student Days: 195

Event	School Status	Date
First Day of School	School and Office Open	August 14,2023
Labor Day	School and Office Closed	September 4, 2023
Columbus Day	School Closed/Office Open	October 9, 2023
Veterans' Day	School and Office Closed	November 10, 2023
Thanksgiving Break	School and Office Closed	November 22-24, 2023
First Semester End Date	NA	December 20, 2023
Winter Break	Staff Work Day	December 21, 2023
	School and Office Closed	December 22, 2023-January 1, 2024
	School Closed/Office Open	January 2-3, 2024
Second Semester Start Date	NA	January 4, 2024
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	School and Office Closed	January 15, 2024
Presidents' Day	School and Office Closed	February 19, 2024
Connections Term	School and Office Open	March 4-22, 2024
Spring Break	School and Office Closed	April 1, 2024
	School Closed/Office Open	April 2-5, 2024
Memorial Day	School and Office Closed	May 27, 2024
Last Day of School	School and Office Open	June 13, 2024

School Closed - Additional Administrator/12 Month Employee Days: November 10, 2023; November 22, 2023; December 22, 2023; February 19, 2024; April 1, 2024

School Status Legend:

School Closed/Office Open = Students and Teachers are not in school but Admin are on duty

School and Office Closed = No one is in school

School and Office Open = Everyone is in school

Staff Work Day = Students are not in school but Admin and Teachers are on duty

Figure 10. Student Calendar for 2023-24

Teacher Calendar

Name of School: Pennwood Cyber Charter School		
CEO:		
School Hours:		
Total Student Days: 195		

Event	School Status	Date
First Day of School (Teachers)	Staff Work Day	August 7, 2023
First Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	August 14, 2023
Labor Day	School and Office Closed	September 4, 2023
Columbus Day	School Closed/Office Open	October 9, 2023
Veterans' Day	School and Office Closed	November 10, 2023
Thanksgiving Break	School and Office Closed	November 22-24, 2023
First Semester End Date	NA	December 20, 2023
First Semester Sections Close	NA	December 21, 2023
Winter Break	Staff Work Day	December 21, 2023
	School and Office Closed	December 22, 2023-January 1, 2024
	School Closed/Office Open	January 2-3, 2024
Second Semester Start Date	NA	January 4, 2024
Second Semester Sections Open	NA	January 4, 2024
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	School and Office Closed	January 15, 2024
Presidents' Day	School and Office Closed	February 19, 2024
Connections Term	School and Office Open	March 4-22, 2024
Spring Break	School and Office Closed	April 1, 2024
	School Closed/Office Open	April 2-5, 2024
Memorial Day	School and Office Closed	May 27, 2024
Last Day of School (Students)	School and Office Open	June 13, 2024
Juneteenth	School and Office Closed	June 19, 2024
Last Day of School (Teachers)	Staff Work Day	June 27, 2024
School Closed - Additional Administrator/12 Month Employee Days: *November 10, 2023; November 22, 2023; December 22, 2023; February 19, 2024; April 1, 2024*		

School Status Legend:

School Closed/Office Open = Students and Teachers are not in school but Admin are on duty

School and Office Closed = No one is in school

School and Office Open = Everyone is in school

Staff Work Day = Students are not in school but Admin and Teachers are on duty

Figure 11. Teacher Calendar for 2023-24

Hours of School Operation

The school site will operate Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM ET – 4:00 PM ET. Since this is a cyber learning environment, the school day is not limited to certain hours for start and end times. However, the teaching staff is available during the hours of operation.

The length of the school day will be as follows:

Students will attend school for 195 days, for a total of 975 or 1,170 hours annually based on grade level (see required instructional hours below).

Grades K – 5 = 975 hours (25 hours per week, recommended 5 hours per day)
Grades 6 – 12 = 1,170 hours (28 hours per week, recommended 5-6 hours per day)

Note: Students are responsible for mastering all material, which may require additional time.

Sample Student and Teacher Schedules

Sample Student Schedule for an Elementary School Student

9/3/2022				
Mon, 29	Tue, 30	Wed, 31	Thu, 1	Fri, 2
Art 2 - What Can You Do with a Line?	Language Arts 2 A - I See It Differently: Speak/Listen	Language Arts 2 A - I See It Differently: Fluency	Language Arts 2 A - I See It Differently: Synthesize	Educational Technology and Online Learning 2 - Diagraphs sh and th (2)
Language Arts 2 A - I See It Differently: Comprehension	Math 2 A - Make a 10 to Add	Math 2 A - Addition Fact Patterns	Math 2 A - Count on and Count Back to Subtract	Language Arts 2 A - Knowing What's Important: Genre
Math 2 A - Doubles and Near Doubles	Science 2 A - Plants Make New Plants	Physical Education 2 - Introduction to Physical Education 2	Science 2 A - How Plants Are Alike and Different	Math 2 A - Think Addition to Subtract
Social Studies 2 A - We Are Good Citizens Day 1	Social Studies 2 A - We Are Good Citizens Day 2	Social Studies 2 A - Reading Skills: Draw Conclusions		Science 2 A - Unit Review
				Social Studies 2 A - Our Rights as Citizens Day 1

Sample Student Schedule for a Middle School Student

Mon, 12	Tue, 13	Wed, 14	Thu, 15	Fri, 16
Language Arts 6 A - Attention to Detail	Educational Technology and Online Learning 7 - File Management and Organization	Language Arts 6 A - Identifying Central Ideas	Educational Technology and Online Learning 7 - Computer Troubleshooting	Language Arts 6 A - Author's Purpose
Language Arts 6 B - Portfolio: Argument Essay II	Language Arts 6 A - Explicit Details and Inferences	Language Arts 6 B - Argumentative Essay: Apply	Language Arts 6 A - Effective Summaries	Language Arts 6 B - Argumentative Essay Unit Test
Math 7 B - Solutions to Real-World Inequality Problems	Language Arts 6 B - Portfolio: Argument Essay III	Math 7 A - Applications of Subtracting Rational Numbers	Language Arts 6 B - Argumentative Essay Review	Math 7 A - Add & Subtract Rational Numbers Apply
Science 6 A - Eclipses	Math 7 A - Subtract Fractions & Decimals	Math 7 B - Inequality Problems Discussion	Math 7 A - Opposites Make Zero	Math 7 B - Inequalities Review
Science 6 B - Air Masses	Math 7 B - Inequality Problems Discussion	Science 6 A - Not Enough Hours	Math 7 B - Inequalities Apply	
Social Studies 7 A - Civics, Politics, and Government (2)	Science 6 A - Reason for the Seasons	Science 6 B - Predicting Weather	Science 6 A - Asteroid Impact Portfolio 1	
Social Studies 7 B - Economic Decision Making (2)	Science 6 B - Air Mass Interactions	Social Studies 7 A - Constitutions and Government (2)	Science 6 B - Many Things Affect Weather	
	Social Studies 7 A - Constitutions and Government (2)	Social Studies 7 B - Distributing Goods and Services (2)	Social Studies 7 A - American Political Identity (2)	
	Social Studies 7 B - Distributing Goods and Services (2)		Social Studies 7 B - Incentives (2)	

Sample Schedule for a High School Student

9/3/2022

Mon, 29	Tue, 30	Wed, 31	Thu, 1	Fri, 2
Algebra 1 A - Working with Sets (2)	Algebra 1 A - Working with Sets (2)	Algebra 1 A - Compound Inequalities	Algebra 1 A - Absolute Value Equations and Inequalities (2)	Algebra 1 A - Absolute Value Equations and Inequalities (2)
German I A - Lektion 17	Environmental Science A - Population versus Community (2)	German I A - Lektion 2	Environmental Science A - Population versus Community (2)	German I A - Lektion 4
Physical Education - Basketball Skills Progression (2)	German I A - Lektion 1	World History A - Unit Review and Test (2)	German I A - Lektion 3	Health, Fitness, and Nutrition A - Understanding Flexibility
World History A - The Legacy of Rome	Health, Fitness, and Nutrition A - Understanding How Joints		World History A - Unit Review and Test (2)	Physical Education - Basketball Rules, Positions, and Current Events
	World History A - The Origins of Christianity			World History A - The Early Middle Ages

Sample One-Week Staff Schedules for Teachers and Other Staff

Sample Elementary Teacher Schedule

MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6
WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 8:45am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am
Accountability Radar, 8:45	LiveLesson: Morning Meet	LiveLesson: Morning Meet	LiveLesson: Morning Meet	LiveLesson: Morning Meet
Grading 9:15 – 10am	Call Currence, 9:30am	Call Le Mar, 9:30am	Call Emmahri, 9:30am	Call Maribeth, 9:30am
Elementary Team Meeting 10 – 11am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am
	Call Kobe, 10:30am	Call Amos, 10:30am	Call Lucas, 10:30am	Call Olivia, 10:30am
Call Parker Training, 11am	LiveLesson: Language Arts	LiveLesson: Language Arts	LiveLesson: Language Arts	LiveLesson: Language Arts
Call Lou, 11:30am	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:
LiveLesson Prep 12:30 – 1:30pm	Grading 12:30 – 2pm	Grading 12:30 – 2pm	Grading 12:30 – 2pm	Grading 12:30 – 2pm
Call Amara, 1:30pm				
WebMail, 2pm	WebMail, 2pm	WebMail, 2pm	WebMail, 2pm	WebMail, 2pm
LiveLesson: Gifted and Tal 2:30 – 3:30pm	LiveLesson: Social Studies	IEP Meeting: Meaghan D 2:30 – 3:30pm	All Staff meeting 2:30 – 3:30pm	LiveLesson: Office Hours,
	MTSS Meeting 3 – 4pm			LiveLesson: Science, 3pm
WebMail, 3:30pm		WebMail, 3:30pm	WebMail, 3:30pm	WebMail, 3:30pm

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

Sample Middle School Teacher Schedule

MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6
Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	Middle School Meeting 8 – 9am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am
Check WebMail, 8:30am		Check WebMail, 8:30am	Check WebMail, 8:30am	Check WebMail, 8:30am
Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am
Prep for LLs 10 – 11am	Science Calls for CBAs/Help 10 – 11am	Science Calls for CBAs/Help 10 – 11am	HR Call Student 6, 10am	Analyze Data/Plan for Next Week 10 – 11am
			HR Call Student 7, 10:30am	
Lunch, 11am	Lunch, 11am	Lunch, 11am	Lunch, 11am	Lunch, 11am
Check WebMail, 11:30am	Check WebMail, 11:30am	Check WebMail, 11:30am	Check WebMail, 11:30am	Check WebMail, 11:30am
HR Call Student 2, 12pm		IEP/504 Meeting 12 – 1pm		Grading 12 – 1pm
HR Call Student 4, 12:30pm	LiveLesson: Prep/Host/Log 12:30 – 2pm		LiveLesson: Prep/Host/Log 12:30 – 2pm	
SpEd Calls for Science 1 – 3pm		HR Call Student 5, 1pm		HR Call 2nd Attempts 1 – 3pm
		HR Call Student 8, 1:30pm		
	HR Call Student 1, 2pm	Science Calls for CBAs/Help 2 – 3pm	Science Calls for CBAs/Help 2 – 3pm	
	HR Call Student 3, 2:30pm			
Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm / Staff Meeting 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm

Sample High School Teacher Schedule

MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6
Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	High School Meeting 8 – 9am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am	Check Email & Voicemail, 8am
Check WebMail, 8:30am		Check WebMail, 8:30am	Check WebMail, 8:30am	Check WebMail, 8:30am
Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am	Grading 9 – 10am
Prep for LLs 10 – 11:30am	Eng 10 LiveLesson: Prep/Host/Log 10 – 11:30am	Eng 10 Calls for CBAs/Help 10 – 11:30am	Eng 10 LiveLesson: Prep/Host/Log 10 – 11:30am	Eng 10 Office Hour 10 – 11am
Lunch, 11:30am	Lunch, 11:30am	Lunch, 11:30am	Lunch, 11:30am	Lunch, 11:30am
Check WebMail, 12pm	Check WebMail, 12pm	Check WebMail, 12pm	Check WebMail, 12pm	Check WebMail, 12pm
SpEd Calls for English 10 12:30 – 3pm	Eng 10 Calls for CBAs/Help 12:30 – 3pm	IEP/504 Meeting 1 – 2pm	Eng 10 Calls for CBAs/Help 1:15 – 3pm	Grading 12:30 – 2pm
		Eng 10 Calls for CBAs/Help 2 – 3pm		Analyze Data/Plan for Next Week 2 – 3pm
Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm / Staff Meeting 3 – 4pm	Grading 3 – 4pm

Sample Special Education Teacher Schedule

MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6
WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 8:45am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am
Update Data 8:45 – 10am	LiveLesson: Language arts	LiveLesson: Language arts	LiveLesson: Language arts	LiveLesson: Language arts
	Service Delivery, 9:30am	Related Services, 9:30am	Service Delivery, 9:30am	Related Services, 9:30am
Department Meeting 10 – 11am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am	LiveLesson Math, 10am
	Service Delivery 10:30 – 11:30am	Service Delivery 10:30 – 11:30am	Service Delivery 10:30 – 11:30am	LiveLesson: Office Hours 10:30 – 11:30am
Related Services, 11am				
Related Services, 11:30am	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3
LiveLesson Prep 1 – 2pm	Gen Ed/Special Ed Collabo 1 – 2pm	Department Meeting 1 – 2pm	MS Gen Ed/Special Educat 1 – 2pm	IEP/504 Data View/Log 1 – 2pm
IEP/504 Meeting/Data Rev 2 – 3pm	IEP/504 Meeting/Data Rev 2 – 3pm	IEP/504 Meeting/Data Rev 2 – 3pm	IEP/504 Meeting/Data Rev 2 – 3pm	IEP/504 Meeting/Data Rev 2 – 3pm
IEP Meeting/Data Review/ 3 – 4pm	IEP Meeting/Data Review/ 3 – 4pm	IEP Meeting/Data Review/ 3 – 4pm	IEP Meeting/Data Review/ 3 – 4pm	IEP Meeting/Data Review/ 3 – 4pm

Sample Advisory Teacher Schedule

MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6
WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 8:45am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am	WebMail/Return Calls 8 – 9am
Data Pull: Accoutability Radar 8:45 – 10am	LiveLesson: Note Taking, 9	LiveLesson: Note Taking, 9	LiveLesson: Note Taking, 9	LiveLesson: Note Taking, 9
	Call Albert, 9:30am	Call Olivia, 9:30am	Call Coryn, 9:30am	Call Curry, 9:30am
Team Meeting 10 – 11am	LiveLesson: How to Resea	LiveLesson: How to Study	LiveLesson: Portfolio Basi	LiveLesson: Test-Taking S
	Call Dorothy, 10:30am	PLC Meeting 10:30 – 11:30am	Call Calapo, 10:30am	LiveLesson: Office Hours 10:30 – 11:30am
Call Jordan, 11am	Call Lise, 11am		Call Cosima, 11am	
Call Kobe, 11:30am	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 11:3	Call Jekobs, 11:30am
WebMail/Return Calls, 12:	WebMail/Return Calls, 12:	Call Zera, 12:30pm	Call Daniel, 12:30pm	WebMail/Return Calls, 12:
LiveLesson Prep 1 – 2pm	Call Rosalind, 1pm	Department Meeting 1 – 2pm	Advisory/Gen Ed/Special E 1 – 2pm	IEP/504 Data View/Log 1 – 2pm
	Call Larron, 1:30pm			
Call Karen, 2pm	Call Lou, 2pm	Call Hady, 2pm	Call Vigo, 2pm	Advisory/Counselors Colla 2 – 3pm
Call Sal, 2:30pm	Call Blythe, 2:30pm	Call Jacie, 2:30pm	Call Diego, 2:30pm	
Call Romero, 3pm	Call Octavia, 3pm	Call Victoria, 3pm	Call Gabriel, 3pm	WebMail/Return Calls 3 – 4pm
WebMail/Return Calls, 3:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 3:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 3:3	WebMail/Return Calls, 3:3	

I.4 School Accountability

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

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

Methods of Self-Assessment or Evaluation

As a public school and aligned with its mission outlined in previous sections, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will measure and report the academic achievement of all students annually, as well as ongoing progress and performance of cohorts and the school as a whole. Students will participate in state proficiency tests (PSSA, PASA, and Keystone Exams) depending upon grade level and course enrollment. The School will set up in-person, proctored exam locations for state testing in multiple locations throughout Pennsylvania. Results of these assessments are reported through the PDE. In addition, state assessment data is logged in the EMS to complete a data snapshot of student academic performance. The Board and school leadership will also include the results of the state-mandated testing in the evaluation of the school's overall performance.

In addition to these state tests, school-based "formative" or "benchmark" assessments and course-based assessments are used and teachers are responsible for implementing them within the school's assessment policies and practices. The school will use Renaissance Star 360 for formative, benchmark assessments to measure student proficiency in reading and math and to obtain a scaled score that can be used to measure academic growth. Renaissance Star 360 is a comprehensive pre-K–12 assessment suite that enables greater student growth as teachers lead students toward mastery of state-specific learning standards for reading, math, and early literacy. The school will also use the Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT), which are online assessments designed to provide teachers with valuable diagnostic information to guide and differentiate instruction. Teachers will administer the Renaissance Star benchmark assessments three times each year. Teachers will also administer the CDT at the beginning of the year and then as needed.

Teachers are primarily responsible for administering assessments. The School's administration oversees the assessment program and will work with education specialists to evaluate and make recommendations for changes. The Board will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that the School is fulfilling the expectations and obligations under Pennsylvania charter school law, the charter, and Board-approved school policy.

Periodic Progress Reports and External Evaluations: The School will account for its progress against its student performance measures to all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, the PDE, and greater community partners periodically.

Annual Goal Report: At least once annually, the school will account for its progress against student performance measures (to include formative assessments and state-required summative assessments) to the Board for presentation at a public board meeting.

Ongoing Communication with Learning Coaches: Communication with parents and Learning Coaches will be frequent and purposeful throughout the school year. Teachers will communicate students' formative and summative progress to Learning Coaches and parents. This communication will keep parents "in the loop" with current school happenings and will help Pennwood Cyber Charter School grow and improve from parent feedback.

Continuous School Improvement: All of this takes place within a school culture of continuous improvement driven by high expectations for all stakeholders, from students to the school leadership team. With student performance as the ultimate measure of success, the school will engage in ongoing review and revisions of policies, processes, and systems, with improvements based on evidence analyzed and lessons learned. This is facilitated by a school year cycle of events focused on improving learner outcomes, including weekly school-based data reviews and SMART goal-focused teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings focused on key processes from Welcome Calls to regular Curriculum-Based Assessments. Monthly School Data Training sessions and PLCs will be used to process data, review student outcomes, and share and discuss best practices. Periodic after-action reviews will focus on outcomes and lessons learned from major improvement initiatives, such as on-boarding of new families at the beginning of the school year and the winter school leadership intervention identification and assignment campaigns. At quarterly and annual meetings, school leadership will be provided opportunities to reflect and share progress on Quarterly Metrics, School Goals, and School Improvement Plans – reviewing results, efforts related to those results, and ways to improve those continuous improvement processes and tools themselves. Assessment data is the main focus of this work, however numerous other data types from multiple data sources will also be used.

The Education Management System (EMS)

The Pearson Online Classroom platform is the EMS and facilitates this self-assessment and continuous improvement in support of helping to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming and practical career skill development. A rich curriculum and system of assessments deployed by expert teachers will be facilitated by the EMS. The EMS will store all needed data about students, their attendance, and their performance. This data will be accessible to appropriate school staff, teachers, and parents/guardians on a moment-by-moment, day-by-day basis. Commonly used platform tools such as the Issue Aware (IA) ticketing system ensures high levels of accountability, transparency, stakeholder involvement, and communication. The EMS provides a myriad of tools for continual capture and strategic analysis of data about student learning. Data will be used for formal reporting to various stakeholders on the students' and the School's instructional progress.

Learning Coaches, teachers, and students will have access to an electronic Grade Book that tracks all results and serves as the basis of changes in the student's learning plan. A key aspect of assessments will be the detailed feedback that will be provided by the teachers beyond the simple right/wrong grading of many traditional assessment vehicles. Pennwood will also use a variety of advanced data visualization tools that provide students, parents, teachers, school administrators, institutional education partners, regulators, and researchers with views of how students are performing.

The Board and school leadership will continually assess the performance of the ESP through review of monthly reports from Board meetings, review of yearly academic progress data (School Performance Profile, Future Ready PA Index, PSSAs, PVAAS, Keystone Exam scores, graduation rate), review of compliance-related information (e.g., cyclical monitoring, Annual Report submission, etc.), independent annual audits, strategic planning through Board retreats, among other assessment methods.

Teacher Standards and Evaluation

Staff Evaluation Process

Pennwood will apply effective performance evaluation practices that were built on applicable frameworks and national experience in the area of virtual education. The School will leverage its ESP's Performance Evaluation System. The Performance Evaluation System encourages school staff to put forth their best effort, focusing all staff on the school's main goals, rewarding and retaining staff based on outcomes/results, and providing continuous feedback for development.

Evaluation Process for Teachers

Teachers will be evaluated by their manager based on competencies along with state-required metrics on student performance and growth as required by Pennsylvania and federal law. The professional competencies will align with the core standards for teaching and may vary by type of teaching position (e.g., Special Education). Competencies will be reviewed with teachers and will be available to teachers for viewing and comment throughout the school year.

Teachers receive a formal mid-year review commencing in December, and a formal end-of-year review commencing in May; these reviews are conducted by the teacher's manager, a role which is filled by the director-level position for each group of staff as shown in the organization charts in Section III.2 Governance. Teachers also receive periodic feedback both formally and informally from their manager throughout the school year, via the Human Resources Information System's Performance Management module. Teachers can document their own achievements in the Performance Management module for consideration during their evaluation. Competencies for teachers will be evaluated in the context of the school's goals, which evaluate student growth and achievement metrics, and observations of an employee's proficiency within each competency. Teachers will be evaluated using various methods, including parent and student feedback, observations of lessons and interactions, and review of relevant documentation and data. The outcome of a staff member's evaluation will affect future decisions regarding staff retention, promotional opportunities, or disciplinary action and termination decisions. Pennwood Cyber Charter School staff will be evaluated based on the following rating scale: highly effective, effective, needs improvement, or ineffective. The evaluation will incorporate student achievement metrics and may include the following: parent feedback, supervisor observations, assessment results, school assessment results, and/or student participation/completion.

Administrator Standards and Evaluation

Evaluation Process for School Administrators

School administrators will be evaluated based on competencies along with state-required metrics on student performance and growth as required by state and/or federal law. The professional competencies will align with the administrative position; for the CEO, these are focused on: Achievement Focus, Instructional Efficacy, Problem Solving/ Strategic Change Management, Culture/Relationship Building, and Managing/Developing People. The CEO will receive a formal mid-year review commencing in December, and a formal end-of-year review commencing in May. The ESP's role in the CEO review is as an observer who then presents findings and recommendations to the Board. The Board then signs off on the CEO evaluation.

Other administrators will receive a formal mid-year review commencing in December, and a formal end-of-year review commencing in May. Reviews for other members of the administrative team are completed by their managers at the school (CEO, Directors, Principals, etc.). The professional competencies will align with the administrative position; for the Principals, these are focused on: Achievement Focus, Instructional Efficacy, Problem Solving/ Strategic Change Management, Culture/Relationship Building, and Managing/Developing People.

Competencies will be evaluated in the context of the school's goals, which evaluate student growth and achievement metrics. Observations of a staff member's proficiency within each competency are also evaluated using various methods including parent, school, and community feedback; observations of lessons and interactions; and review of relevant documentation and data, including student growth data. The school administrator and CEO competencies may include school development and leadership, team development and leadership, student achievement/data management, and personal development and professional skills. Additional competencies may be assigned based on position, responsibilities, and job level. School administrators and the CEO will be evaluated based on the following rating scale: highly effective, effective, needs improvement, and ineffective. School administrators and the CEO will receive an Overall Individual Rating on the end-of-year review based on evaluation of the competencies.

Standards for Performance

To ensure the highest quality teaching, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will set as its goal that the majority of its teachers earn ratings of Effective or higher. The instructional staff will be observed on a regular basis and evaluated using a comprehensive, multi-layered evaluation system. The teacher evaluation system may include the following:

- Parent surveys, which may rate such things as the responsiveness, effectiveness, knowledge, and skills of their assigned teacher(s);
- CEO and supervisor evaluations from observations of Learning Coach/student interaction, including LiveLesson sessions, and review of correspondence;
- Peer reviews evaluating the degree of cooperation, support and sharing of knowledge;
- Aggregate performance of enrolled students based on a value-added improvement model and documents by data from the EMS; and
- An annual performance plan created by each teacher incorporating strategies to achieve measurable school goals.

The school administrator and CEO evaluation systems will be focused on evaluating the specific competencies that an effective administrator would display. This may include the following and will be aligned to Pennsylvania administrator evaluation systems:

- **School Development and Leadership**: school culture, creating a commonly owned vision and plan for success, high performing leadership team;
- **Team Development and Leadership**: school team formation, staff performance management, staff satisfaction and retention;
- **Student Achievement/Data Management**: instructional leader, internal/external data to effectively drive student achievement; and
- **Personal Development and Professional Skills** - leadership development of self, judgment and problem solving, knowledge and implementation of key policies and regulations, and an environment of trust which includes clear communication, relationship building and expectations, community relations.

Meeting these competencies may be demonstrated through:
- Parent surveys, rating the responsiveness, effectiveness, and instructional expertise of the School as a whole;
- Aggregate performance of enrolled students based on a value-added improvement model as documented through data captured by the EMS; and
- An annual performance plan detailing his/her strategies to achieve measurable school goals.

The figure below provides an example of the types of competencies that may be reviewed during a teacher's evaluation. Pennwood would incorporate any statutory changes to its internal Teacher Evaluation system if enacted by the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

Element	Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
Conducts regular, effective Live Lesson Sessions	Is often unprepared with no clear goal for LiveLesson sessions. Students are generally disengaged. Sessions primarily consist of lecture or powerpoint format with no innovation or group work.	Conducts regular LiveLesson sessions but the sessions are ineffectual and provide no clarity or gap content to the curriculum. Students are generally uninvolved and disengaged. Teacher may occasionally use LiveLesson tools.	LiveLesson sessions are held regularly with a clear focus and plan for addressing curriculum gaps or areas of the curriculum that need clarity. Teacher uses many different LiveLesson tools and strategies to maintain a high level of student engagement.	EFFECTIVE PLUS.. the teacher develops expertise in the LiveLesson tools and serves as a mentor to peers. The teacher serves as an expert for the school.

Figure 12. Teacher competencies incorporate Professionalism, Instructional Expertise, Quality Instruction, Student Engagement, and Data-Driven Instruction.

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

Accountability to Parents

The Board strongly believes in having a parent voice and perspective consistently considered and intends to ensure that parent voices are represented, including potentially serving as a board member. The parent position could be a parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled, formerly enrolled, or intending to enroll. Parent board members benefit from intensive Board training geared toward making them optimally effective representatives of parent interests. Parent board members will be encouraged to seek officer positions and may be appointed to provide close review/feedback on key documents such as the School Handbook, Parent/Learning Coach Agreements, and other materials for parents before full Board action In addition, there are multiple ways for parents to be involved in education. In the cyber learning model, parents often act as the Learning Coach and are therefore directly involved in their child's education. Thus at Pennwood, parents will be closely involved in their child's education in partnership with their child's teacher.

Communication with parents and Learning Coaches will be frequent and purposeful throughout the school year. Teachers will communicate students' formative and summative progress to Learning Coaches. Communication will serve three main objectives: 1) to help the teacher monitor the student's progress, 2) to engage parents in the life of the school with current school happenings and their child's performance, and 3) to help the school grow and improve from parent feedback.

The school will regularly distribute information through school newsletters, the EMS home page, and "Must Read" email messages to ensure parents are informed. Communication will continually make students and best practices stronger and more effective. All communication between teachers and parents or students will be documented in the log section of the EMS, which allows for detailed tracking

of interactions as well as seamless support for students and their families from multiple individuals. A communication provided through Learning Coach Support portal is also sent monthly to Learning Coaches and Caretakers via email message. The school will also use its website to communicate relevant, up-to-date information to parents, students, and the community.

Families are key in supporting the mission of Pennwood Cyber Charter School. Through formal and informal channels from field trips, course ratings, surveys and more, families will have an avenue to provide feedback and input. This ensures that the school is on a cycle of continuous school improvement and that all stakeholders are valued. Families may participate in Pennwood Cyber Charter School in many ways, including:

- **Public Comment**: Parents may make public comments at board meetings.

- **Closed Facebook Groups**: Led by parents, families can join a closed Facebook Group in their region in order to plan events among themselves, get advice from other families and generally create comradery among the parents.

- **Parent Engagement Program**: A nationwide advocacy organization, Club Connections, brings together parents of students attending schools using the same curricular program across the country and encourages members to engage with other families interested in online education in their local communities.

- **Field Trips**: Parents may attend and participate in field trips with their student(s) and may also suggest potential field trip locations to school administrators.

- **StarTrack and Course Ratings**: Parent input is gathered on an ongoing basis via StarTrack ratings for lessons. On every lesson in the curriculum, and on the home page for each Learning Coach, is a StarTrack rating box, inviting ratings on a five-star scale and an opportunity to provide text feedback.

- **Learning Coach Support**: Learning Coaches, most often parents, are provided ongoing support and opportunities to interact with other Learning Coaches during synchronous online sessions. Successful onboarding and continued support contribute to the success of the Learning Coach and student. Programs provided by Learning Coach Support are designed to make this process easier and give Learning Coaches the skills and resources needed to better support their students.

Parents or other parent-designated caring adults will serve as Learning Coaches and play an active role in the learning process, providing input, and communicating regularly with teachers. Pennwood will promote and support the significant role of parents by providing training for parents and multiple avenues for communication. Learning Coaches will complete an online orientation designed to familiarize them with the important role they play in supporting their student as a learner. The Learning Coach Support team offers various resources and programs for Learning Coaches including:

- **Learning Coach Central** – This website accessed from the Learning Coach Home Page in the EMS provides multiple resource documents, video Quick Clips, and helpful links that support Learning Coaches in their role and in providing instructional support to their student.

- **Learning Coach Monthly Update** – This online monthly communication is sent to Learning Coaches with information about EMS updates, upcoming Learning Coach webinars, and Learning Coach Central resource highlights.

- **Learning Coach Success Series** – Learning Coaches are invited to attend live webinars that equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to assist their students in the virtual school environment. Time for questions and answers is provided at the end of each presentation.

Recordings are available following the live webinars. The webinar series consists of two types of webinars.

- o The *Getting Started in Virtual School* series offered to new Learning Coaches provides detailed information introducing Learning Coaches to the EMS. Topics relevant to planning and organization to best support students in the home environment are also presented. Additionally, Learning Coaches are introduced to course and lesson structure and are shown how to use the lesson content to guide their students to academic success.

- o The *Adding to Your Learning Coach Toolbox* series is offered to all Learning Coaches throughout the year. This series provides information and tips to engage students surrounding topics like student motivation, the learning process, subject-specific learning, and character development.

- **Learning Coach Community (optional)** – The School may choose to opt into an online, interactive, school-sponsored forum for Learning Coaches to communicate with one another. The Learning Coach Support team monitors Learning Coach interaction and posts timely information, school announcements and advice from seasoned Learning Coaches.

- **Learning Coach Mentor Program (optional)** – The School may also choose to participate in the Learning Coach peer mentor program. After attending the *Getting Started in Virtual School* webinar series, this program allows new Learning Coaches to request a meeting with a seasoned Learning Coach to discuss effective Learning Coach practices and best ways to support student learning.

Additionally, Pennwood will host virtual Information Sessions while field trips will be an additional way of encouraging and facilitating community engagement.

Survey Results

Parents will participate in a formal annual satisfaction survey to help identify what the school is doing well and how the school can improve. An independent evaluator will conduct an independent parental evaluation that measures such items as parent satisfaction with the curriculum, teachers, and other aspects of the program. The independent evaluation results will be used to ensure effective parent satisfaction with the program as a whole and any areas of improvement. Faculty and administration will use these results to undergo continuous school improvement and focus on areas where improvement is needed. Parent satisfaction is key to monitoring success of the program to maximize each student's potential. In a 2021-22 survey conducted by Shapiro + Raj (an independent market research company) of students in Pennsylvania using the curricular program chosen by Pennwood, 96% of parents agreed their school's curriculum is high quality, 98% of parents were satisfied with the helpfulness of teachers, and 93% agreed their student is making good progress.

With Pennwood's intentional focus on college and career readiness and attention to developing well-rounded, global citizens, we believe the School's results will provide students and families with an exceptional level of satisfaction. The extended three-week C-Term and badging components will elevate the School from other cyber education programs and provide a unique culture for Pennwood families.

Real-Time Access to a Student's Education & Progress

The powerful Grade Book, embedded in the EMS, will enable parents to track progress daily, and to see up-to-the-minute information on grades, assessments, and overall lesson completion.

The EMS will allow parents, counselors, teachers, Learning Coaches, and students to work together in a safe and supportive environment. The EMS will allow communication with teachers and other students and families via secure email messages and message boards. LiveLesson sessions (with individual and small groups of students using voice-over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing) will allow teachers and students to interact with one another in real time in a "cyber classroom." Threaded discussions on course-based message boards will also be used as appropriate by grade level to provide opportunities for collaboration and interaction. Curriculum-based assessments (CBAs), via telephone conversation or LiveLesson session, allow a quick and effective way to gather information on students' understanding of concepts.

All of these evaluation and communication tools described above will ensure Pennwood is accountable to all students and their families.

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

School Budget and Financial Records Review

Financial reports will be reviewed and discussed monthly by the Board. For additional assurances, the Board will hire an external accounting firm to conduct semi-annual agreed upon procedures to review the School's financial records. Lastly, an annual audit will be conducted. The audit will be conducted by a different independent Certified Public Accountant selected by the Board in accordance with Governmental Auditing Standards and will meet the specific compliance requirements set forth by Pennsylvania and as required by the Annual Report filed August 1 of each year. The date of the annual independent audit will be determined by the Board's by-laws and articles of incorporation's and meet the state regulation. The school will be insured as required by law.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School intends to use an industry-standard accounting software to gain insight into the school's finances, improve the decision-making process, speed up response time to financial situations, and create powerful self-service analysis with business intelligence tools. Pennwood will use the chart of accounts required by the PDE.

The School and the Board's Treasurer, in consultation with Pearson, will work together to create monthly and annual financial reports.

More detailed information on the topics of budget and financial records reviews is provided in Appendix S – Board Policies, specifically for Budget Planning, Preparation, and Monitoring Policy and the Financial Planning Policy.

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

System for Maintaining School Records and Disseminating Information

Student Record Policies

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will comply with applicable state and federal law with respect to the receiving, holding, and transferring of student records, including the provisions of the Regulations of the State Board of Education on Pupil Records (PA Code 22, Ch.12).

As a general matter, Pennwood will house and maintain its physical records at its proposed administrative facility. The School will fully comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law that gives parents/legal guardians and students certain rights regarding the student's education records. Included is the right of the parent/legal guardian (or

eligible student) to consent to the disclosure of any personally identifiable information (PII) contained in a student's education records. Pennwood is committed to the protection of a student's education records and the PII found within those records. The School will not disclose student education records or PII without a signed and dated written consent, unless the disclosure meets one or more of the conditions that permit schools to disclose PII from an education record as set forth by FERPA.

In the EMS, access to student information and data will be controlled by a central team of administrators, trained in FERPA, using a complex system of roles, permissions, and locations. Only users in a particular location, who have permissions at that location, will be permitted to access student data that is permissioned using roles and locations. Data points and reports will be assigned to roles, including vendors who use student data for accounting and billing purposes. Access to the reports and all student data will be controlled by these roles. Only users in a location with the correct roles will meet the requirements to access the data.

All data accessed via EMS will be accessed through forced SSL for privacy and security purposes. Private data transmitted between systems for data reporting purposes will always be transmitted with secure FTP or over a private VPN that provides encryption.

In addition to the FERPA requirements, IDEA provides additional privacy protections for students who receive special education and related services. Part B of IDEA incorporates and cross-references FERPA. The school is aware of the cooperation between FERPA and IDEA and will comply with the requirements of both. The School will also comply with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 ("COPPA").

Pursuant to FERPA, schools may disclose, without consent, student education records to officials of another school or school system where the student seeks or intends to enroll. However, upon enrollment with Pennwood, parents will provide written consent for the release of their student's education records by signing the Charter School Student Enrollment Notification Form prescribed by the PDE, which specifically notes the parent's consent to the transfer of school records.

While FERPA is vast in its discussion of the review, amendment, and privacy rights related to education records, it does not speak to the retention and destruction of such records and does not include a records retention plan. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will develop a records management program and train school level Records Custodians (typically one of the administrative assistants) to address the creation, maintenance, storage, and final destruction of records in accordance with Pennsylvania and federal laws and regulations.

Release of Directory Information

The School may release Directory Information (currently defined by Pennwood as student name, student WebMail address, city of residence, student telephone number, and student grade level) to third parties without consent, as permitted by FERPA. If a parent/guardian (sometimes referred to as Caretaker in documents) or eligible student does not wish to have Directory Information disclosed to third parties, they may opt out of all disclosure of this information by indicating in the Annual FERPA Directory Notification, which is presented on the Caretaker "To Do" List upon a student's enrollment, and annually thereafter for all returning students. If families do not make a selection, then the school may, without additional permission, disclose the Directory Information to third parties as permitted by FERPA.

Release of Educational Records without Consent: Legitimate Educational Interest

The School may provide a student's educational records to third parties without consent in certain situations listed under FERPA. Examples include disclosure to Pennwood school officials, including

teachers and vendors employed by or under contract with the School for special education related services or other services, who the school has determined has a "legitimate educational interest", or the transfer of educational records to school officials of the student's new school upon request from the new school.

Release of Student Records with Consent

With the exception of information which FERPA and/or applicable state law or court order permits the school to release without consent, the school must obtain written consent from the parent/legal guardian or eligible student prior to releasing any education record or personally identifiable information to any third party. Consent to release this information must be made in writing, be signed by the parent/guardian or eligible student, and include the following information:

- A specific description of the information or record(s) to be released.
- The party or agency to which the information will be released and their address.
- The signature of the requestor, and the date of the request.

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

System for Maintaining Accurate Student Enrollment and Withdrawal Information

Pre-Enrollment

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be open to all eligible students and will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of a child's disability or the child's need for special education or supplementary aids or services. The School will regularly review the enrollment process procedures to ensure that all students, regardless of demographics or school district of residence are progressing through the enrollment process efficiently and without bias.

As part of that process, Pennwood will provide parents with a clear and accurate picture of the virtual learning experience so they can make the most appropriate choices for their students. This may be accomplished through telephone conversations, emailed communications, and virtual information sessions. The school will strongly encourage families to review the school website, talk to enrollment team members, and attend a virtual information session webinar, explaining the benefits and importance of gaining a clear understanding of the school and what to expect.

Pennwood's admissions procedures will comply with IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) 2004 and Civil Rights protections. More specifically, the School will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Part B of IDEA and will comply with the same federal and state audit requirements as do other public schools in Pennsylvania.

Enrollment Notification

Pennwood will follow Section 1748-A of the Charter School Law. Within 15 days of enrolling a student, Pennwood and the parent or guardian, will notify the student's school district of residence of the enrollment using the notification form developed by the PDE.

If the student's school district receiving the notification determines that the student is not a resident of the school district:

- Within seven days, the school district will notify Pennwood and the PDE that the student is not a resident and provide the basis for the determination.

- Within seven days of receiving the school district notice of non-residency, Pennwood will provide a response to both the school district and the PDE.

If Pennwood agrees that the student is not a resident of the school district, it will determine the proper district of residence and notify the correct district of residence of the enrollment through use of the notification form developed by the PDE.

If Pennwood reconfirms that the student is a resident of the school district, it will indicate so in the response. The school district may then appeal to the PDE for a final decision.

If a student becomes ineligible or leaves the charter school, Pennwood will ensure all appropriate paperwork is submitted and/or forwarded to the new school and the EMS will be updated. As per Section 1748-A of Charter School Law, Pennwood, and the parent or guardian, will provide written notification to the school district of residence within 15 days following the withdrawal of a student.

Pennwood will also follow Section 1743-A(c)(d) of the Charter School Law. The CEO, or his/her designee, will make available upon request, electronically via email, the following information to each student's school district of residence:

- A copy of the charter

- A copy of Pennwood Cyber Charter School's application

- A copy of all annual reports prepared by Pennwood Cyber Charter School

- A list of all students from that school district enrolled in Pennwood Cyber Charter School

Pennwood will, upon request and prior to the student's first day, provide electronically via email, in the EMS, or via the school's website, the following information to the parent or guardian of a student:

- A list and brief description of the courses of instruction the student will receive. The list will be updated annually for each grade level in which the student is enrolled.

- A description of the lessons and activities offered online and offline.

- The manner in which attendance will be reported and work will be authenticated.

- A list of all standardized tests the student will be required to take during the school year and the place where the test will be administered, if available.

- The meetings to be held during the school year between a parent or guardian and a teacher as well as those among other school officials or parents or guardians and the manner in which the parent or guardian will be notified of the time and place for the meeting.

- The address of Pennwood Cyber Charter School and the name, telephone number and e-mail address of the CEO and other school personnel.

- A list of any extracurricular activities provided to the student.

- The names of the student's teachers, if available, and the manner in which each teacher can be contacted by the student or the parent or guardian.

- A list of all services that will be provided to the student.

- Copies of policies relating to computer security and privacy, truancy, absences, discipline, and withdrawal or expulsion of students.

- Information on:

- o Pennwood Cyber Charter School's professional staff, including the number of staff personnel and their education level and experience.

- o Pennwood Cyber Charter School's performance on the PSSA and other standardized test scores.

- Information regarding the proper usage of equipment and materials and the process for returning equipment and materials supplied to the students by Pennwood Cyber Charter School. A parent or guardian will acknowledge, either in writing or electronically, the receipt of this information.

- A description of the school calendar including, but not limited to, the time frame that will constitute a school year and a school week, holiday, and term breaks.

Enrollment Process

The Board will contract with Pearson to implement and conduct the enrollment process on behalf of Pennwood Cyber Charter School, in accordance with enrollment and withdrawal policies and procedures adopted by the Board and reviewed by Board Counsel, consistent with local, state, and federal law. The enrollment policies will be reviewed by Board Counsel and approved by the Board as part of finalizing the school handbook.

A successful regionalized enrollment model will be used to provide dedicated support and customized services, including:

- Regular communication with school leadership on enrollment strategy and resolution of escalated issues.

- Pennsylvania-specific training for all enrollment and placement personnel as well as refresher trainings.

- Robust quality monitoring to make sure the services and support provided to Pennwood Cyber Charter School families and students are accurate and comprehensive so that staff supporting the school are acting as an extension of Pennwood Cyber Charter School's team.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will abide by all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, policies, and guidelines for student enrollment and will not impose enrollment requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. These policies and guidelines include compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act regarding students experiencing homelessness. The CEO or his/her designee will serve as the liaison for homeless students. Students who meet the definition of homeless will be enrolled without delay despite the inability to provide required documents, such as proof of residency. For the purpose of immediate enrollment, students awaiting foster care placement are considered homeless students.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School's admissions process will only require the following documents in the admission process:

- Proof of Residence: A deed, mortgage statement, rental agreement, utility bill, current credit card bill, property tax bill, vehicle registration, driver's license or DOT identification card to verify residence in Pennsylvania. If a parent cannot provide this record, they will be asked to contact enrollment to seek assistance.

- Proof of Age: A birth certificate, notarized copy of birth certificate, baptismal certificate, notarized statement from the parent or another relative indicating the date of birth, or a valid

passport, or a prior school record indicating the date of birth may be used. If the parent cannot provide any of these, they are asked to contact enrollment to seek assistance.

- Immunizations: A copy of the student's immunization record or exemption, a written statement from the former school district or from a medical office that the required immunizations have been administered, or that a required series is in progress, or verbal assurances from the former school district or a medical office that the required immunizations have been completed, with records to follow.

- Parent Registration Statement: A sworn statement attesting to whether the student has been or is suspended or expelled for offenses involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, infliction of injury or violence on school property, and attesting to whether the student was previously or is presently expelled under the provisions of Section 1318.1. Students will not be delayed or denied enrollment based on the information contained in the sworn registration statement.

- Home Language Survey: Completion of a Home Language Survey is required for all students new to the school.

In addition to these requirements but not as a condition of enrollment, Pennwood will request:

- PDE Charter School Student Enrollment Notification Form: Parent's will be asked to complete this form during the application process. Once the parent completes the initial enrollment process, this form is used to notify the resident district of the parent's decision to enroll their student at Pennwood.

- Academic Records: These documents can include unofficial transcripts, recent report cards, student schedules, IEPs and 504 plans to support course placement. These will not be a condition of enrollment and will be requested from the prior school upon enrollment.

- Student Registration Form: This is additional information to support the student's enrollment and course placement; failure to provide this information will not delay or prevent enrollment.

- Physical and Dental Forms: These may be requested but will not be required as a condition of enrollment in Pennwood Cyber Charter School.

- Custody Orders/Custody Agreements or Guardianship Authorization: In accordance with 24 P.S. §13-1301, 13-1302, Pennwood may require a resident to provide a custody document such as a dependency order or an affidavit for school enrollment when seeking to enroll a child. Custody documentation will not delay or be a barrier to enrollment unless required by state regulation.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will maintain and post enrollment and admissions processes and procedures which comply with applicable law. The School will not charge tuition or have other admission requirements, except as otherwise provided in the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

Through its recruitment and enrollment guidance activities, Pennwood will regularly disclose full details about its program and encourage families to carefully consider its academic rigor and practical implications before applying. Pennwood will also provide tools (such as contact with other parents and contact with a School Counselor if desired) to help parents decide whether Pennwood is truly the right fit for their children and families.

Pennwood students who enroll in the School will remain enrolled through twelfth grade, unless there is a voluntary withdrawal, mandatory withdrawal pursuant to state law, expulsion, graduation, court-ordered placement, IEP team placement, or other applicable laws.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School does not encourage a student currently attending the School to disenroll from the School or transfer to another school for any reason.

Admission Methods and Eligibility Criteria

Specific state requirements for enrollment eligibility such as age of kindergarteners and age of beginners will be available for interested families on the School's website. The School will abide by all federal, state, and local policies and guidelines for student admission and will not impose admission requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. The CEO, or his/her designee, will serve as the liaison for homeless students.

Students may withdraw from the school at any time in accordance with Pennsylvania law. Pennwood staff will work diligently to ensure a smooth transition. Once a student transfers from Pennwood, the School will notify the students' district of residence and will respond to a request for records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA) and relevant Pennsylvania state law regarding student privacy and protection policy.

Prior to withdrawing, the Learning Coach and/or student will be encouraged to discuss with the School staff the student's reason(s) for withdrawing as it may be possible to address issues so that the student does not need to withdraw. This data will be recorded and will be reviewed by the CEO to continually reflect on the School's ability to serve families and students.

Students will be admitted in a non-discriminatory manner. Dedicated teams will support families extensively throughout the enrollment process to ensure that they have what they need throughout the process and understand the cyber charter school model.

Details on the lottery process are provided in Section V.2.C.

G. Describe plans to evaluate student performance.

Student Performance Evaluation

Assessments

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will adhere to state-established accountability measures, utilize Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs), administer state assessments, and follow proficiency measures defined by Pennsylvania policy and legislation. In addition, Pennwood will use well-established benchmark assessments like Renaissance STAR 360 (STAR) as well as its own internal assessment tools. The School's various assessments will combine with top-quality curriculum and instruction to improve student achievement and maintain a high level of accountability. Pennwood will use assessments that are aligned with the curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.

Such assessment tools may include resources that accompany the text used in a course (i.e., checks for knowledge, unit tests, and topic test banks) and any assessments delivered via software. All assessment tools go through a multi-step evaluation prior to approval for course use. Tools are first evaluated by an Assessment Design team to determine their quality and appropriateness in regard to the following criteria: alignment with course content and standards; age appropriateness; reading ability; cognitive rigor (questions are measured against Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge); best practices for item creation (e.g., clarity, relevance, and plausibility of item and distractors); accessibility; and compatibility with the EMS assessment engine (ease of implementation).

Pennwood's assessment efforts will begin with a thorough placement process and progress review, including information gleaned from the initial administration of the online CDTs and Renaissance STAR assessments. The School will also utilize ongoing online and offline assessments to measure student

progress on the curriculum and a technology-based assessment tool to review student progress over the school year. Teachers will be encouraged to use CDTs as needed throughout the school year to gauge student progress.

The tools outlined below will help guide each student's participation during the three-week C-Term as well. After evaluating performance and progress, students may be identified to participate in the Career Competency badge and state testing preparation while other students may be best served working on credit recovery and remediation efforts.

Pennwood will use the following tools to evaluate the performance and progress of students:

Benchmark Assessments: Pennwood will utilize a variety of benchmark assessments from Renaissance STAR selected for their appropriateness for each grade level. These assessments align with state standards and will be given to students in the fall, winter, and spring. STAR Assessments are computer-adaptive tests, meaning each student's testing experience is unique. When a student answers a question correctly, STAR automatically selects a more difficult item to be the next question. When a student answers a question incorrectly, the opposite occurs, and the next item is less difficult than the current one. The system understands how skills relate to one another—and that a student correctly answering advanced items doesn't need to be tested separately on the basic component skills. By adapting to students and eliminating unnecessary questions, STAR can accurately measure student performance and growth with fewer items and less time. Complete results are immediately available for educators via interactive, easy-to-read reports.[29]

Classroom Diagnostic Tools: The Pennsylvania Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) are online assessments designed to provide teachers with valuable diagnostic information to guide and differentiate instruction. The CDT reports provide a snapshot of how students are performing in relation to the Standards Aligned System (SAS) and help identify student academic strengths and areas in need of improvement. Educators receive links to curricular resources and materials that align to the Learning Progression Map. The untimed, computer-adaptive assessments focus on Literacy, Mathematics, or Science and include approximately 48-60 items.

CDTs provide information that is typically not identified through other types of assessments. CDTs focus on individual student growth by identifying strengths and weaknesses, and potential strategies to improve that learning. Benchmark assessments compare student understanding or performance against specific grade-level standards rather than taking a snapshot of student understanding. Combined, these assessments enable teachers to provide high quality, standards-based instruction that is differentiated for the needs of individual learners.

Ongoing Informal Assessments: Students engage in formative assessments that tap into all levels of student learning such as scored daily assignments, daily checks for understanding that require students to apply and integrate new skills in a thoughtful manner, and regular online quizzes and tests to measure understanding of newly presented material.

Unit Assessments and Offline and Online Portfolio Assignments: Throughout each logical unit of study, students will be required to complete a series of offline and online assessments. Offline assessments may include written compositions, science lab reports, short-answer questions, essays, book responses, and a variety of work samples. These assessments require direct teacher evaluation. Online assessments include quick checks, quizzes, online practices, and unit tests. While the quick checks and quizzes may be brief and frequent, the more comprehensive unit tests occur at

---

[29] Source: https://www.renaissance.com/products/star-assessments/explore/

the end of an entire unit. Many online assessments provide students and families with immediate objective feedback while offline assessments provide valuable reflection, feedback, and expertise from credentialed teachers. Student progress reports and grades include a combination of online and offline assessments.

Curriculum-Based Assessments: Pennwood will use curriculum-based assessments (CBAs) as a quick and effective way to gather additional information on students' understanding of concepts. Teachers conduct CBAs, via telephone conversation or through one-on-one LiveLesson sessions, as a quick and effective way to gather information on students' understanding of concepts. CBAs are used to validate a student's understanding of concepts against the collected formative data within the EMS and identify areas where they may need additional support or practice. CBAs also assist teachers in verifying that students are doing their own work, pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts, and verify that student learning is on track.

Baseline Achievement Data: Whenever possible, standardized test results will be integrated into an incoming student's basic information in the EMS. Likewise, results for the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA) and Keystone Exams that students take while enrolled at the school, which are proctored face-to-face at a physical location, are included in the EMS along with internal pre-, mid-, and post-test data. This data will be used to track student progress from year to year and within the year and to inform course placement and instructional needs.

State-Mandated Assessments: Pennwood will be dedicated to meeting and exceeding all of Pennsylvania's grade level requirements. Students will participate in the PSSA, Keystone Exams, and all other assessments depending upon grade level, or course enrollment, as required by law. The School will set up in-person, proctored locations throughout the state, based on the geographic locations of the student population. While the teaching/learning center area may be enlisted as a testing site, most testing will occur at other locations. Testing sites may include locations such as hotel conference rooms, public library meeting rooms, local schools if available, private tutoring and learning centers, and local colleges. Test sites will be easy for families to find, safe, secure, and will provide free parking.

Geographic population maps will be created to identify areas where testing sites are needed based on student population. Sites will be reviewed annually to adjust for an increase in student population. Students will be assigned to a testing center. If a family has transportation issues and is not able to make it to a testing site, the school will work with the family to make accommodations and may help with travel.

State Testing/Benchmarking

As a public school, students will participate in required state testing, including summative assessments such as the PSSA for ELA and Math in grades 3-8 and Science in grades 4-8; the Keystone exam for Literature, Algebra I, and Biology; and the PASA as appropriate.

As outlined above, the School will use formative benchmark assessments to measure student proficiency in reading and math and to obtain a scaled score that can be used to measure academic growth. Renaissance STAR 360 is a comprehensive pre-K–12 assessment suite that enables greater student growth as teachers lead students toward mastery of state-specific learning standards for reading, math, and early literacy. The computer-adaptive assessments identify areas of strength and need in the student's learning profile and measure student growth during the school year to help

formulate learning goals and monitor student progress.[30]   Teachers will use STAR assessments, in addition to utilizing the Pennsylvania CDTs to diagnose, remediate, and extend learning for their students.

The Pennwood Board will partner with its ESP to provide testing support. The ESP currently provides state testing services to 33 virtual statewide public schools, some of which have successfully administered state tests for over 10 years. State Testing Services will include maintaining and distributing a National State Testing Best Practices Manual to help facilitate the testing process. In addition, a State Test Plan will be developed each school year. The Test Plan will address the tests, testing schedule, testing sites, student registration, test security, site security, and Special Education accommodations. The State Test Plan will also include a strategy to create an awareness and communication campaign for families, track student registration, participation, and make-up testing, all to help ensure that the 95% Accountability Rate testing requirement is met.

All staff members who serve as test proctors will be trained on Pennsylvania specific rules and requirements for testing. Training will be conducted synchronously by the School's Director of Data and Student Assessments with staff members at least two to three weeks before testing commences. Each staff member will acknowledge that they have been trained and understand the importance of maintaining test security. Tests and related materials will be kept secure at the school site or an approved designated location. Paper and pencil tests, when transported to students throughout the state, will be moved in locked cases (such as a locked suitcase or other device). A State Testing Team will support the School with online testing requirements and opportunities. Staff members will be trained on test security throughout the testing process by the School's Director of Data and Student Assessments. Results of these annual assessments will be reported by the State as well as communicated directly to parents when required by state law.

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

Measuring Student Development

The table below provides a plan that identifies the measures that may be used to indicate that students are making academic progress, the grade levels at which the assessments will be used, and frequency of assessing. This includes assessments through the curriculum and current State-mandated assessments.

Figure 13. Pennwood will use multiple methods for measuring student development throughout each school year.

Grade Level	Measures Used to Indicate Progress	Frequency of Assessing
K-8 for Reading K-8 for Math	Renaissance STAR 360	Fall, Winter, Spring
9+	Renaissance STAR 360	Fall, Winter, Spring
3-8	PSSA/PASA	Spring
9-12	Keystone Exams	Winter, Spring, Summer

Detailed descriptions of Renaissance STAR 360 were previously provided in this application.

---

[30] Source: https://www.renaissance.com/products/assessment/star-360/?int_content=int_web

Whenever possible, state standardized summative test results will be integrated into an incoming student's basic information in the EMS. Likewise, results for state standardized summative tests that students take while enrolled at Pennwood, which are proctored face-to-face at a physical location (throughout the state – tests are typically not proctored at the administrative facility), will be included in the EMS, along with internal pre-, mid-, and post-test data. This data will be used to track student progress from year to year and within the year, and to inform the course placement and instructional needs of students.

Information from these assessments will be provided to teachers during the school year as an indicator of the possible risk of a student who may be struggling academically.

In the case of Renaissance STAR 360 assessments, an analysis was conducted on the relationship between fall and winter assessment scores on these assessments and state test proficiency across multiple states. They identified particular score values which are associated with an elevated likelihood of the student failing a state assessment in the spring. Scores that fall within the two lower interquartile ranges of normative scores within the fall and winter will be highlighted for teachers as indicating a student may be at-risk. These values will be highlighted separately for teachers for math and reading.

As state assessment scores become available, students who have a score on that assessment from the prior year that does not meet established state standards for their grade level and tested subject will also be highlighted to teachers as indicating a student may be at-risk.

In the case of Renaissance STAR Early Literacy Assessments, students may be flagged for intervention using scores that map onto the three developmental stages (Emergent Reader, Transitional Reader, and Probable Reader).

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

How Student Evaluation Will Be Used to Improve Student Achievement & Attain Objectives

As mentioned earlier, whenever possible, state standardized test results will be integrated into an incoming student's basic information in the EMS. Likewise, results for state standardized tests that students will take while enrolled at Pennwood Cyber Charter School are included in the EMS, along with internal pre-, mid-, and post-test data. This data is used to track student progress from year to year and within the year, and to inform the course placement and instructional needs of students.

Formative assessments provide educators with critical information about student progress and can be used to adjust the teacher's approach and the pace of instruction throughout the year. Formative assessments are often used as tools for uncovering opportunities for instructional intervention because they give teachers information about where additional practice and support may be needed. Research has shown that timely and specific feedback from formative assessments can enable teachers to make a significant impact on student learning.

In *Formative Assessment in Seven Good Moves* posted to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) website, Brent Duckor stated, "The research is clear: What teachers do in their classrooms matters. But which practices really make a difference?" John Hattie (2012) conducted an extensive meta-analysis, looking at 800 studies that focused on locating a specific student achievement outcome and identifying an influence on that outcome. Formative assessment topped his list of the most influential practices that improve student outcomes."

Teachers will review assessment data as a regular part of their daily routine. Teachers will review unit tests and align CBA questions accordingly.

Teachers will review student progress on the benchmark assessments and student membership in various subgroups. During this review, teachers will note which students, in which subject areas, need additional assistance to achieve mastery. In addition, teachers will identify what a student must know to move forward in a course in order to be successful in the next course in the sequence. The instructional methodology depends on teachers monitoring data sets that indicate if a student is or is not learning. These data sets guide teachers towards identifying a student's specific skill set that needs remediation. The tools within the EMS, such as the Student Performance Reporting for students in grades K–8, are helpful in showing alignment between assessments and the curriculum. With support from the administrative team, teachers will use that data to determine the difference between a whole group reiteration and a small group remediation. The School will also use this data to help determine additional instructional sessions. Students may be asked to participate in required tutoring sessions and/or supplemental programs to help build their foundation skills. Students who are excelling have the opportunity to participate in small group LiveLesson sessions as well as join the National Honor Society.

Additionally, teachers will spend several days of professional development, throughout the school year, learning how to look at and understand the data results. Teachers will use this data to drive instruction and identify at-risk students. Staff will meet regularly to evaluate students' progress and make changes as needed in the instructional program.

Managing and Interpreting Data

Teachers will access the Student Performance Reports that provide real-time student performance data on assessments. The reports identify the student score and the performance against each item. For some courses, objective level performance data is also provided. Teachers can use this data to determine which students need more help with a particular concept. They may then participate in individual or small group tutoring virtually with these students targeting specific skills.

At both the section and individual student levels, the Student Performance Reports can be generated displaying the essential skills and standards for a course and exactly where in the curriculum each standard and skill is assessed.

The Student Performance Reports will provide real-time student performance on each of the essential skills and standards based upon individual assessment items that measure standards-based objectives that students should master by the end of that grade level. Data can be used to identify students who have mastered or not mastered specific objectives. Teachers can run this report as frequently as they like to see exactly how students are progressing with regard to each of the skills and standards for that subject and grade. This method enhances the multi-tiered instruction model; identifies essential skills and standards by subject/grade level; identifies where these essential skills and standards are assessed; adheres to the RTI model; provides access to and analysis of real-time data to determine mastery/proficiency; incorporates data-driven decisions throughout instruction; identifies the need for tiered interventions for non-mastered/proficient skills and standards; and identifies students' response to the implemented interventions.

Coordinating Professional Development to Improve Student Achievement

The CEO will coordinate professional development for teachers and staff to improve student achievement and to support the School Improvement Plan. With student performance as the ultimate measure of success, the School will engage in ongoing review and revisions of policies, processes, and systems, with improvements based on evidence analyzed and lessons learned. This is facilitated by a school year cycle of events focused on improving learner outcomes, including weekly school-based data reviews and SMART goal–focused teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings focused on student achievement. Monthly School Data Training sessions and PLCs will be used to process data,

review student outcomes, and share and discuss best practices. Periodic after-action reviews will focus on outcomes and lessons learned from major improvement initiatives, such as beginning of the school year onboarding of new families. At regular meetings, school leadership will be provided opportunities to reflect on Quarterly Metrics, School Goals, and School Improvement Plans – reviewing results, efforts related to those results, and ways to improve those continuous improvement processes and tools themselves. Assessment data is the main focus of this work; however, numerous other data types from multiple data sources will also be used.

In addition, the three-week C-Term will serve as a critical time to focus in on students most in need of individualized support as students will be offered credit recovery and remediation opportunities. Pennwood staff will also be provided professional development specifically tailored to material covered during the C-Term, centered around improving career readiness and academic outcomes.

I.5 School Community

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

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

School Relationship with Community

As a statewide cyber charter school, Pennwood will seek to form deep relationships with community organizations across the state. The support of community organizations will be essential to the success of Pennwood Cyber Charter School. The Board has prioritized creating and sustaining partnerships with organizations that complement the School's mission. The Board has received support throughout the Commonwealth for its educational plan (see Appendix G, Sustainable Support). In fact, Pennwood has received statements of support from individuals and entities located in over half the counties across Pennsylvania, 39 out of 67 counties. Pennwood also held 12 in-person information sessions across the state to help inform interested students and families about this unique educational model as well as making an online version of its presentation available through its website, https://www.connectionsacademy.com/pennwood-cyber-charter-school/. Pennwood will continue to develop community connections via its website even after the application is submitted. The School will continue to take full advantage of valuable community partnerships to ensure that the School reflects the needs and wishes of regional communities.

The School will actively seek out community organizations to partner with and provide real connections among students and the community. Pennwood also seeks to form a positive and ongoing relationship with Central York School District where the administrative facility will be, as evidenced by the Board President's letter, email and invitation to meet with Dr. Peter J. Aiken, Superintendent of Central York School District. Information was provided to educate and inform organizations about Pennwood's unique school model and to find opportunities to work together. The Board plans to continue these discussions after the School has been approved and identify specific activities in which students may participate.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in regular field trips and outings facilitated by School staff and Community Coordinators – parent volunteers whom Pennwood supports in organizing such activities for families who live nearby. Field trips may include visits to the following (note, this is a sample list only and final field trip locations will be chosen based on geographic locations of students and alignment to academic objectives:

- The Franklin Institute

- Carnegie Science Center

- Whitaker Center for the Arts

- iFly Indoor Skydiving

- Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

- Allentown Art Museum

- Museum of Indian Culture

- Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine and Steam Train

- Kings Gap Environmental Education Center

- Brandywine River Museum

- First National Bank Museum

- Bucks County Civil War Round Table Library Museum

- Fort Necessity National Battlefield

- The Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site

- Gettysburg National Military Park

- The State Museum of Pennsylvania

- Bartram Garden

- Bucks County Childrens Museum

- Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

- Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation

- Daniel Boone Homestead

- Discover Space, State College

- Erie Zoo and Botanical Gardens

- Frick Art and Historical Center

- Herr's Snack Factory Tour

- Johnstown Children's Museum

- Lehigh Valley Heritage Museum

- Ned Smith Center for Nature and Arts

- Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts

- Pennsylvania State Capitol

- Punxutawney Weather Discover Center

- Valley Forge National Historical Park

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

Parent Involvement in the School's Mission

Parent involvement is significant to the cyber learning model in support of the School's mission to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and career skill development. There are many benefits to parent involvement in education. Parent participation in a child's education can lead to improved grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in post-secondary education.

Parents are crucial to the planning process of the School, as well as its operation. The skills and interests of parents will be leveraged as part of the career skill development program. The School will invite parents to share their talents during field trips and other sessions that will help to support the School's mission of career skill development. Interested parents have already played an important role in encouraging the formation of the school and will remain involved leading to the school's opening. Parental feedback is also an important hallmark of the school's outreach and information sessions in the community. Pennwood will take full advantage of this valuable communication with families to ensure that the school reflects their unique needs and creative ideas.

The table below lists the information sessions held through the end of August to inform and engage parents and the community about Pennwood. The School hosted both in-person information sessions as well as a virtual information session available online prior to submitting the cyber charter school application. Information sessions will continue through August 2023 to assist enrolling families.

Calendar of Parent and Community Information Sessions		
Date	**Time**	**Location**
8/2/22	3:00 p.m.	The Mall at Robinson Center, 100 Robinson Drive Pittsburgh, PA
8/3/22	9:00 a.m.	Starbucks at 202 6th Street, Pittsburgh PA
8/4/22	3:00 p.m.	Denim Coffee, 1 South Hanover Street, Carlisle, PA
8/11/22	12:30 p.m.	Panera, 1500 Camp Hill Mall, Camp Hill, PA
8/12/22	9:00 a.m.	Starbucks, 1 Lincoln Square, Gettysburg, PA
8/13/22	3:30 p.m.	Panera, 3301 Bath Pike, Bethlehem, PA
8/15/22	5:30 p.m.	Starbucks, 5116 A Jonestown Road, Harrisburg, PA
8/18/22	11:30 a.m.	Panera, 40 Noble Boulevard, Carlisle, PA
8/22/22	2:00 p.m.	Dunkin Donuts, 2201 Penrose Avenue, Philadelphia, PA
8/23/22	11:00 a.m.	Starbucks, 3401 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA
8/30/22	9:00 a.m.	Starbucks, 303 Arsenal Road, York, PA

Calendar of Parent and Community Information Sessions		
Date	Time	Location
8/30/22	11:00 a.m.	Panera, 1221 Carlisle Road, York, PA

Parents or other parent-designated caring adults will serve as Learning Coaches and play an active role in the learning process, providing input, and communicating regularly with teachers.

Parents may participate in Pennwood Cyber Charter School in many ways, including:

Parents Involved in Planning the School: Parents of prospective students were offered multiple ways to provide input on the planning of the school prior to this application being submitted. Parents were invited to attend multiple Information Sessions and to communicate to the Board feedback on the school's unique badging program.

Parent Representation on the Board: The Board would consider any Pennwood parent interested in joining the board. The parent position could be a parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled, formerly enrolled, or intending to enroll. Parent members benefit from intensive Board training geared toward making them optimally effective representatives of parent interests. Parent Board members will be encouraged to seek officer positions and may be appointed to provide close review/feedback on key documents such as the School Handbook, Parent/Learning Coach Agreements, and other materials for parents before full Board action.

Ad hoc Board Committees: Parents may serve on ad hoc groups convened by the Board to focus on particular issues such as community partnerships or neighborhood outreach.

Public Comment: Parents may make public comments at public board meetings.

Community Coordinators: The parent Community Coordinators play a critical role in the school by contributing to a vibrant and active school community to serve the needs of families distributed across a wide geographic region. The Community Coordinators provide an important communication link between families and the school. Community Coordinators and staff will reach out to community-based organizations and businesses to coordinate face-to-face community service and field trip opportunities for students.

Parent Club: Parents can also join an exciting club that brings together parents of prospective students who reach out to their local communities to spread the word about Pennwood Cyber Charter School and provide support and encouragement to parents.

StarTrack and Course Ratings: As mentioned previously, parent input will be gathered on an on-going basis via StarTrack ratings for lessons. On every lesson in the curriculum, and on the home page for each Learning Coach, there is a StarTrack rating box inviting ratings on a five-star scale and an opportunity to provide text feedback.

The School will promote the significant role of parents by providing training for parents and multiple avenues for communication. Learning Coaches will complete an online orientation designed to familiarize them with the important role they play in supporting their student as a learner. The Learning Coach Support team offers various resources and programs for Learning Coaches including:

- **Learning Coach Central** – This website accessed from the Learning Coach Home Page in the EMS provides multiple resource documents, video Quick Clips, and helpful links that support Learning Coaches in their role and in providing instructional support to their student.

- **Learning Coach Monthly Update** – This online monthly communication is sent to Learning Coaches with information about EMS updates, upcoming Learning Coach webinars, and Learning Coach Central resource highlights.

- **Learning Coach Success Series** – Learning Coaches are invited to attend live webinars that equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to assist their students in the virtual school environment. Time for questions and answers is provided at the end of each presentation. Recordings are available following the live webinars. The webinar series consists of two types of webinars.

  - The *Getting Started in Virtual School* series offered to new Learning Coaches provides detailed information introducing Learning Coaches to the EMS. Topics relevant to planning and organization to best support students in the home environment are also presented. Additionally, Learning Coaches are introduced to course and lesson structure and are shown how to use the lesson content to guide their students to academic success.
  - The *Adding to Your Learning Coach Toolbox* series is offered to all Learning Coaches throughout the year. This series provides information and tips to engage students surrounding topics like student motivation, the learning process, subject-specific learning, and character development.

- **Learning Coach Community (optional)** – The School may choose to opt into a program that provides an online, interactive, school-sponsored forum for Learning Coaches to communicate with one another. The Learning Coach Support team monitors Learning Coach interaction and posts timely information, school announcements and advice from seasoned Learning Coaches.

- **Learning Coach Mentor Program (optional)** – The School may choose to participate in the Learning Coach peer mentor program. After attending the *Getting Started in Virtual School* webinar series, this program allows new Learning Coaches to request a meeting with a seasoned Learning Coach to discuss effective Learning Coach practices and best ways to support student learning.

Parents are key components of supporting the mission of Pennwood Cyber Charter School. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in regional Facebook pages, and during the three-week C-Term, parents and students will participate in community-oriented activities as part of the program. Through formal and informal channels from field trips to surveys, parents have an avenue to provide feedback and input. This ensures that the School will be on a cycle of continuous school improvement and that all stakeholders are valued. The School will draw upon the deep and diverse community connections represented on the Board, whose members represent business and education entities across the state and beyond, to ensure that students have multiple opportunities to benefit.

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

Parent Complaint Procedures

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will have an established process for resolving community, parental, and other public complaints as documented in the draft School Handbook so that concerns and complaints are addressed in a timely manner. Students and/or their parents/guardians may file written reports regarding any suspected prohibited behavior by completing the Report of Bullying, Aggressive, Title IX complaint form, or Other Prohibited Behavior Form, found in the My School Section of the Virtual Library (located in the EMS), and sending this to the school. Such reports may be filed with any school

staff member or administrator, and they are promptly forwarded to the CEO for review, investigation, and action.

Students and/or their parents/guardians may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be prohibited behavior(s) by verbal report to a teacher, CEO, Title IX Officer, or other school personnel. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected prohibited behavior, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who received an informal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing by completing the Report of Bullying, Aggressive, or Other Prohibited Behavior Form, found in the My School Section of the Virtual Library. This written report is promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the CEO for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

More detailed procedures are outlined in Appendix V, Draft School Handbook, section 9.5 Grievance Process for Caretakers.

I.6 Extracurricular Activities (Athletics, Publications and Organizations)

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

A. Describe the program of extracurricular activities planned for the charter school. Note: Charter schools shall be permitted, if otherwise qualified, to be members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Program of Extracurricular Activities

Clubs and Activities

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will offer students access to student-to-student interactions through a Global Clubs and Activities program. As an integral part of Pennwood's proposed academic program, students will be offered access to a wide range of nationally facilitated virtual clubs and special events throughout the school year. Clubs are co-curricular and teacher facilitated. Clubs and activities are facilitated by local school staff, national school staff, or certified staff from the ESP depending upon the club. Participation in these virtual clubs and activities enhances students' feeling of connectedness, provides socialization opportunities, and improves academic achievement and school retention rates. All clubs and activities are non-credit and have no impact on student grades. Clubs require caretaker sign-ups and last throughout most of the school year. Single-occurrence Pop Up Events that range in subject matter with no sign-up required are offered about ten times a month from October to May.

The following provides a sampling* of some of the clubs the School plans to offer during the 2023-24 school year, though specific clubs do change from school year to school year based on analyzing student interest and feedback:

- Art Club is designed to spark a student's creativity by exploring two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, photography, and graphic design through techniques and styles associated with each medium. Students have the opportunity to create original designs and artwork, share their artwork with peers, learn about appropriate critique guidelines, and provide feedback to other club members. (Grades: 6-12)
- Arts and Crafts encourages students to create crafts using materials found at home and in nature. Through the topics of culture, science, and math, students work on projects from the course as well as monthly special craft challenges. (Grades: K-5)

- <u>Career Clubs</u>: At the middle school level, students will be enrolled in a "career exploration club," which will foster exploration of the initial four career clusters (IT, Health Sciences, Business, and Manufacturing) by bringing in guest lecturers with relevant industry experience, facilitating career-oriented project-based learning, and providing fun, real-world experiences that provide a "taste" of what working in various career pathways could entail. High school students will participate in clubs and extracurriculars that continue to foster career exploration at the lower classman level, gradually shifting to more focused preparation for desired career pathways/post-graduation outcomes (e.g., resume development, mock interviews, internship reflecting and experience sharing).
- <u>Chess Clubs</u>: Introduction and Advanced members learn, socialize, and play in an atmosphere of friendly competition using an exclusive gaming site. After completing a tutorial, students are matched with competitors of the same skill level, and the online games begin. There are also monthly presentations by a Grandmaster in our advanced club, and an end-of-year tournament for all skill levels. (Grades: K-12)
- <u>Conversation Corner</u> is new for the 2022-23 school year; this club is a supportive community for students with diverse learning styles and speaking proficiencies. Students form an inclusive, safe, structured environment for all learners and beautiful brains to communicate on microphone during live sessions and discussion areas. Connections are made through shared experiences, facilitated by speech language pathologists. (Grades: 6-12)
- <u>Debate Club</u> members learn best practices and put them into practice during LiveLesson sessions. Members learn the art of public speaking and critical thinking while working in collaborative teams. Research, reasoning, and understanding opposing perspectives form the foundation for real time debates. (Grades: 6-12)
- <u>Drama Club</u> members participate in several aspects of theater, including history, performance, stage management, and different themes. Students can share their activities from the club course and participate in acting exercises during biweekly LiveLesson sessions. Students can also collaborate on the Message Boards to create projects and perform together.
- <u>E-sports Clubs</u> members participate in monthly LiveLesson sessions to enjoy interactive lessons in the surprising history, impressive present, and exciting future of E-sports. Students will also have the opportunity to get involved in E-sports League tournaments throughout the year where featured games are Rocket League (6-12), and Valorant (9-12 with caretaker approval), in addition to learning about marketing, shoutcasting, and other roles related to E-sports. Club members are not required to play the game. (Grades: 6-8 & 9-12)
- <u>Gaming and Technology Clubs</u> allows students who have an affinity for technology and gaming to explore and discuss gaming styles and genres, careers in the gaming and technology industry, and share their original work in LiveLesson sessions. Individual and collaborative projects may include creating elements of video games and investigating Internet safety and virtual threats. (Grades: K-5, & 6-12)
- <u>Global Trek</u> members are immersed in tips for traveling to all the continents of the world, including the culture and geography of different countries. Students can share their activities from the club course during biweekly LiveLesson sessions, and they can also collaborate on the Message Boards to discuss traveling and opening their world to new experiences and cultures. (Grades: 6-12)
- <u>Kindness Club</u> members inspire each other to build up virtual students from around the country and world, and complete regular challenges to scatter kindness throughout their communities. (Grades: K-5)

- <u>Leadership Club</u> members learn valuable leadership skills through monthly LiveLesson sessions. They also put their new skills to good use through special opportunities as student leaders. Students who complete enough activities can earn a Leadership Certificate. (Grades 6-12)
- <u>Movement Club</u> is for students who want to get a workout in between classes and after completing their schoolwork. Students explore and share different techniques to promote movement through an active Message Board and LiveLesson sessions. (Grades: K-12)
- <u>Science Sleuths</u> members put on their raincoats and investigate weather's wild side, with a focus on the weirder side of science by following along with fun, hands-on activities from the club course that will leave them scratching their heads! Club members can also collaborate through discussions and sharing experiment results on the message boards. (Grades: K-5)
- <u>Writers' Oasis</u> provides a virtual environment where students can work collaboratively and individually to write original stories and poetry in all genres of fiction and non-fiction, and publish work on *The Monitor* blog. Students have the opportunity to share their writing and favorite books during LiveLesson sessions. Students can use the Message Boards to offer insight on student writing samples, create collaborative stories, and discuss various literary works or authors. (Grades: 6-12)

The following provides a sampling* of some of the Pop Up Events Pennwood plans to offer during the 2023-24 school year, though specific events vary from school year to school year based on analyzing student interest and feedback:

- Amazing Animal Migrations, K-12
- Amazing Machines, K-12
- Back to School Kickoff, K-12
- Bring Your Pet to School, K-12
- Clubs & Activities Pep Rallies, K-12
- Celebrating Language and Culture Series, K-12
- Celebrating Percussion Instruments All Around the World, K-12
- Debt-free Degree, 6-12
- Elementary Storytelling Series, K-5
- Fashion: What Does it Mean to You? K-12
- Glow in the Dark Science: All About Bioluminescence, K-12
- Gross Science, K-12
- Hour of Code, K-12
- May the Fourth Be With You: Star Wars Pop Up, K-12
- Money Smarts, 6-12
- Mysteries of Math, K-12
- Photography Showcase, K-12
- Pride Snack & Chat
- Rescued Animals Virtual Field Trip
- Snack & Chats
- STEAM Pop Ups
- Talent Show
- Virtual Art Field Trip
- What's Cooking?
- Yarn Enthusiasts
- Young Leaders

*Specific club and pop up offerings are subject to change.

Field Trips

Students and families at Pennwood will benefit from educational, face-to-face field trips to provide opportunities for students to interact face to face. School staff members, in coordination with parent volunteers, will facilitate enriching in-person community activities and field trips to round out the comprehensive learning experience. Pending local health conditions and state/local regulations, students will have the opportunity to participate in regular field trips and outings to various regional areas as well as during the C-term. The School will offer a wide range of field trips. Field trips provide students with additional opportunities to socialize with their peers and are designed to help both students and Learning Coaches connect to their school and to each other. Students may go on trips to museums, farms, science centers, cultural centers, and unique experiential learning opportunities throughout the region. Families may attend and participate in Learning Events with their student and may also suggest potential field trip locations to the school.

The Board understands that charter schools shall be permitted, if otherwise qualified, to be members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. The flexibility of Pennwood's program allows for extracurricular activities; current students in cyber schools are participating in Olympic-level sports, professional acting, pageants, and political activism. Students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan will be provided necessary accommodations services to participate in field trips.

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

Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities within School Districts

If a student would like to participate in the extracurricular activities offered by their district of residence, the district must provide the student an opportunity to participate. This means that if the district holds tryouts for the team, it must allow cyber charter school students the same opportunity to try out for the team. If approved, the Board will create relationships in the form of Memoranda of Understanding with local school districts to ensure adherence to Section 1719-A (14), which states:

"Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, no school district of residence shall prohibit a student of a charter school from participating in any extracurricular activity of that school district of residence: Provided, that the student is able to fulfill all of the requirements of participation in such activity and the charter school does not provide the same extracurricular activity."

The Board has budgeted to accommodate for students who wish to participate in activities beyond what Pennwood Cyber Charter School offers to currently enrolled students including activities such as, but not limited to, sports, theater, music, or clubs not currently offered to students. The Board will set a budget for such activities each year. The students must be in good standing from a participation perspective to qualify and must apply to have their activity approved in advance. The CEO and/or designee will review each application and determine the amount to contribute to the resident district for the student's activity in accordance with any Board-adopted policy or guidance. The CEO will report annually to the Board on how the money was spent (for example: how many students participated, what types of activities did they participate in, feedback from students, and actual amount spent).

Pennwood will endeavor to also work with local school districts to promote the district's extracurricular activities to Pennwood's students. The School will pay the reasonable incremental costs incurred by these districts if students do participate in order to encourage expansion of the students' community.

Students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan will be provided necessary accommodations and services to participate in extracurricular activities within the school district.

I.7 Technology Support

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

How the School Uses Technology

Pennwood Cyber Charter School plans to contract with Pearson for the use of its proprietary Educational Management System (EMS). The EMS is a combination of a learning management system, student information system, and communication tool that enhances all aspects of an online school from curriculum, human resources, teaching/learning, to evaluation. The EMS creates a rich, vibrant online classroom experience that allows parents, teachers, and students to work together in a supportive and secure environment. The comprehensive, reliable, and user-friendly system is designed to guide students through a rigorous curriculum in a way that also meets their individual learning needs. Students and parents can access the EMS online 24 hours per day. Email and chat are securely located within the EMS. Students, parents, and teachers may only use it to communicate with each other, protecting them from spam, contact from strangers, and other mainstream email issues.

The EMS integrates key functions and services that are critical to maximizing the academic experience and performance of enrolled students for both the education program and school operations. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will have personalized access to the EMS through the creation of a branded registration page, login page, and EMS menu bar. The EMS allows teachers, students and parents to:

- View daily, weekly, and monthly schedules at a glance;
- Access all lessons and course assignments;
- Monitor progress through an up-to-the-minute Grade Book;
- Receive alerts and communicate through secure email messages;
- Communicate with teachers and other students and families via message boards; and
- Provide ratings and written feedback about specific lessons and overall learning experiences.

The EMS allows parents, counselors, teachers, Learning Coaches, and students to work together in a safe and supportive environment.

LiveLesson sessions will allow teachers and students to interact with one another synchronously in a cyber classroom. Teachers will use the LiveLesson tool regularly to convene groups of students together to focus on particular learning topics and may also use LiveLesson for independent student work groups to collaborate on activities, via chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing. In addition, teachers will collaborate synchronously with students and Learning Coaches through phone calls to discuss learning and conduct Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs).

Threaded discussions on course-based message boards are also used as appropriate by grade level to provide opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students. In addition, courses will incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions which are required for all students. This tool creates important opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students, increases writing skills, and provides opportunities for a "real-world" audience.

To ensure equitable access for students, Pennwood will provide a laptop for all students, a printer, and Internet subsidy to each family.

Given the balance of modes and media for learning at Pennwood, actual time spent working online for students will vary according to each student's developmental level, learning needs, and learning styles. Students in grades K-5 may spend 15-30% of their school day online; students in grades 6-8 may spend about 50-75% of their school day online; and students in grades 9-12 may spend 75+% or more of time online.

Since the majority of the work is done offline for students in grades K-5, including reading books and writing, students will have a flexible schedule. Pennwood will provide 975 hours per year of instruction for students in grades K-5 (due to the additional three weeks of the C-Term). For students in grades K-5, between 15 and 30% of the school day will be centered on interactive online courses.

Students in grades 6-8 will be provided with a prescribed schedule, although students may work with teachers as needed to create more accommodating schedules. About 50-75% of the school day will be centered on interactive online courses. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide 1,170 hours of instruction per year (more details below).

When students move into grades 9-12, they will maintain their prescribed schedule. Again, students may work with teachers to create modified schedules. About 75+% of the school day will be centered on interactive online courses. Although the hours of instruction per week may vary, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will 1,170 hours of instruction per year at the secondary level (see below).

As mentioned previously under the school calendar section, students will attend school for 195 days, for a total of 975 or 1,170 hours annually based on grade level (see required instructional hours below). Grades K – 5 = 975 hours (25 hours per week, recommended 5 hours per day) Grades 6 – 12 = 1,170 hours (28 hours per week, recommended 5-6 hours per day)

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

How Effective Use of Technology Will Improve Student Achievement

Pennwood Cyber Charter School's use of the EMS will enable multiple avenues of technology-facilitated improvements for student achievement. In addition, each student will receive a laptop and access to a printer and Internet subsidy, ensuring equitable access to technology.

Multi-tiered Instruction

The School employs a multi-tiered instruction framework based upon the Response to Intervention (RTI) model that deeply links curriculum, standards, assessments, and interventions that have a direct impact on student mastery and resulting standardized test performance. Through this model every student has access to the resources they need to be successful: Tier I Core Curriculum with Differentiation, Tier II Targeted Instructional Supports, and Tier III Intensive Instructional Supports. Student Support teams (SST) meet regularly to develop an intervention plan and strategies for improvement for students who need more frequent, targeted learning support.

Intervention Indicators

Intervention Indicators are displayed in the EMS to facilitate a teacher's identification of students who may need additional instruction or intervention in math, reading, or both. Additionally, teachers can run performance reports through the EMS. This method accomplishes the following:

- Enhances the multitiered instruction model;
- Identifies essential skills and standards by subject/grade level;
- Identifies how and where these essential skills and standards are assessed within the program;
- Provides a Response to Intervention model;

- Provides access to and analysis of real-time data to determine mastery/proficiency;
- Incorporates data-driven decisions throughout instruction;
- Maximizes use of the instructional support programs, resources, and data;
- Identifies the need for tiered interventions for non-mastered/proficient skills and standards; and
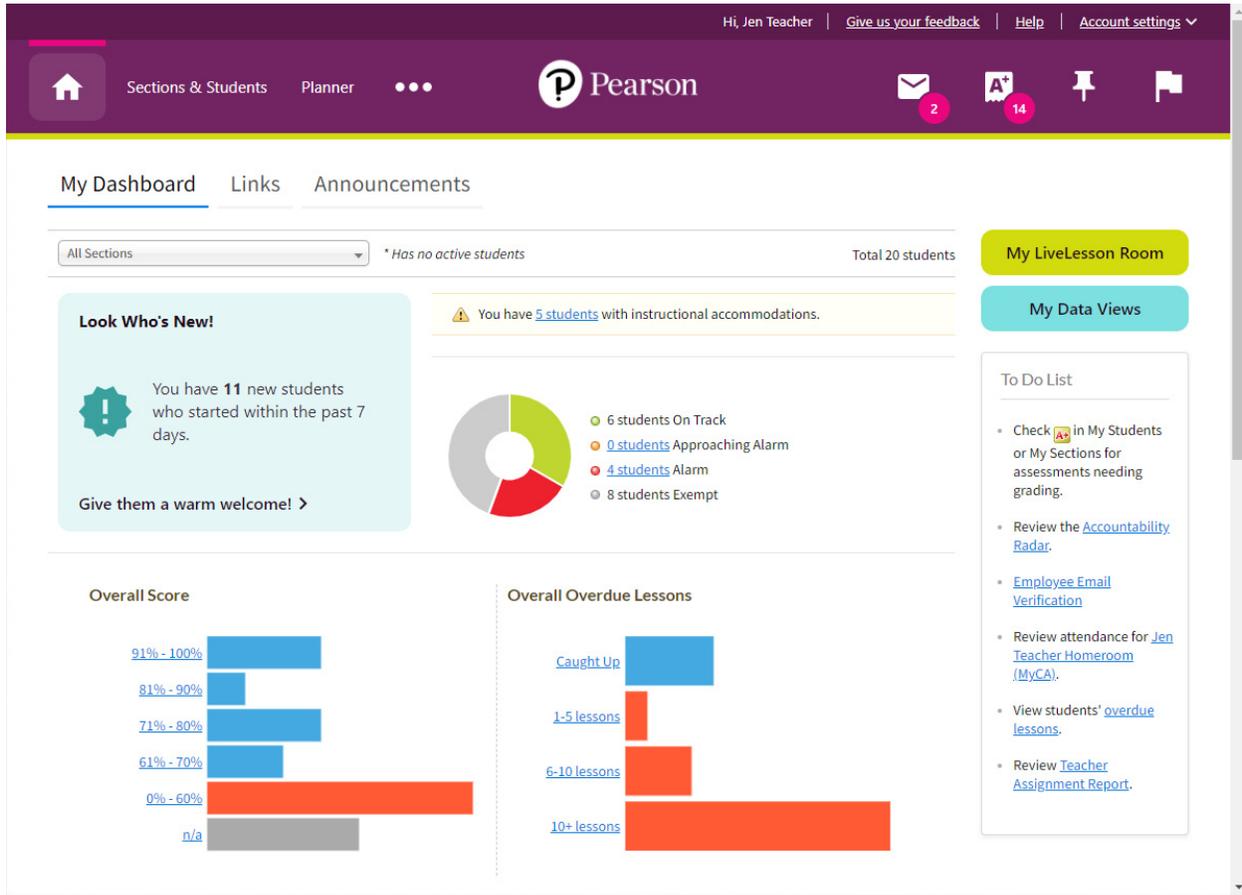- Identifies students' response to the implemented interventions.

Figure 14 The Teacher Homepage enables teachers to easily identify students who may need additional instruction or intervention

As student performance data becomes available, analysis will be performed using current and prior data to identify trends for each performance indicator. Once performance trends are identified, they will be reviewed to determine if any trends are considered "challenges." Trends and priority performance challenges will be captured. Pennwood staff will analyze root causes and set performance targets, improvement strategies, and interim measures and benchmarks.

All of this takes place within a school culture of continuous improvement driven by high expectations for all stakeholders, from students to school leaders. With student performance as the ultimate measure of success, the School will engage in ongoing review and revisions of policies, processes, and systems, with improvements based on evidence analyzed and lessons learned. Additional school improvement efforts are facilitated by a school year cycle of events focused on improving learner outcomes, including weekly school-based data reviews and goal-focused teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings focused on key processes from Welcome Calls to regular Curriculum-Based Assessments. Monthly

School Data Training sessions and PLCs will be used to process data, review student outcomes, and share and discuss best practices. Periodic after-action reviews will focus on outcomes and lessons learned from major improvement initiatives, such as beginning of the school year on-boarding of new families.

At quarterly and annual meetings, school leadership will be provided opportunities to reflect on Quarterly Metrics, School Focus Goals, and School Improvement Plans: reviewing results, efforts related to those results, and ways to improve those continuous improvement processes and tools. Assessment data is the main focus of this work; however, numerous other data types from multiple sources will also be used.

The EMS facilitates the school's self-assessment and continuous improvement in support of helping to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and practical career skill development. The EMS will store all needed data about students, their attendance, and their performance. This data will be accessible for viewing by appropriate school staff, teachers, and parents/guardians on a moment-by-moment, day-by- day basis. Universally used, platform-specific tools such as the Issue Aware (IA) ticketing system ensure high levels of accountability, transparency, stakeholder involvement, and communication. The EMS provides a myriad of tools for continual capture and strategic analysis of data about student learning. Data will be used for formal reporting to various stakeholders on the students' and the school's instructional progress.

Parents (and Learning Coaches if the Learning Coach is not a parent), teachers, and students will have access to an electronic Grade Book that tracks all results and serves as the basis of changes in the student's learning plan. A key aspect to assessments will be the detailed feedback that will be provided by the teachers beyond the simple right/wrong grading of many traditional assessment vehicles.

Pennwood will also use a variety of advanced data visualization tools that provide students, parents, teachers, school administrators, institutional education partners, regulators, and researchers with views of how students are performing.

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

Technical Support for Students and Parents

Students, parents, and staff can access extensive application and technical support through on-line Help (in the EMS) and live phone support via ESP-provided Support Services to families and staff. Procedures for contacting the Support Services team are shared during the onboarding process and are posted for families and staff in the EMS.

In addition, numerous online resources will be provided for parents, students, and staff. The extensive Online Help system is searchable and easy to use. It contains a wide array of how-to topics about:

- Using features of the EMS

- Troubleshooting problems with a student's computer

- Using the software on a student's computer

An online detailed training will also be available that is interactive and engaging. It covers topics such as:

- Helping students be successful in a virtual school

- Staying organized

- Curriculum differences across grade levels
- Using the EMS

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

Policy for Ensuring Privacy

The School will ensure the privacy rights of eligible children in the collection, maintenance, release, and destruction of data and records. The School will follow the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the Confidentiality Section of IDEA, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and other applicable student data privacy laws. Included is the right to the protection of a student's education records and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from unauthorized disclosure. Section I.4 School Accountability (response to question E) provides additional detail on compliance with FERPA. For additional information regarding ensuring the privacy and security measures to guarantee the confidentiality of data gathered online, please see the following:

- The Acceptable Use policy for the EMS is provided in Appendix F.
- Student Information Privacy and Protection Policy: Please see Section 7, subsection on Special Education: Educational Records Confidentiality of the Draft School Handbook in Appendix V.
- Records Destruction Policy: Please see Schedule 7 of the Statement of Agreement in Appendix N.

Security Measures to Guarantee Confidentiality of Data

All data accessed via EMS will be accessed through forced SSL for privacy and security purposes. Private data transmitted between systems for data reporting purposes will always be transmitted with secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) or over a private VPN that provides encryption.

The EMS contains several unique and efficient mechanisms for families and schools to communicate with one another. Since the EMS is a closed system, no communication can be made to or from anybody outside of the system. Caretakers in the system may opt in to have school emails forwarded to a personal email address in the profile page; however, the Caretaker can only respond to a Webmail by logging into the EMS. The Caretaker can opt out at any time. Parents or legal guardians can control what, if any, of their student's information is posted and accessible to others in the School Directory. To set or modify these options, parents can go to the School Directory Data View to adjust their student's permissions at any time. The School Directory Data View is accessed from the student's home page in the EMS under Data Views or though the student's "information" icon.

The EMS maintains a complex system of roles, permissions, and locations to control access to data and files. For example, a user may have the teacher "role" in his/her school "location" and therefore is only able to access information about students in his/her school but is not able to access information about students in other schools. Likewise, a CEO (role) of the school (location) is only able to access information about students and teachers in his/her school and cannot access information about other locations.

Access to data is controlled by "role" also. In order to perform a particular job, a user has the necessary role(s) that will facilitate doing his/her job. For example, the enrollment staff is able to view, enter, and report on data about students for facilitating the enrollment process. Teachers can view, enter, and report on data to facilitate the learning process.

Through Pennwood's ESP partnership, the School will have a multi-faceted disaster recovery plan to safeguard the EMS, sensitive student data, and the overall school infrastructure by preventing and/or rapidly recovering from a prolonged outage or other technology disaster. The hosting services provide the following steps to mitigate common risks related to hosting:

Risk	Mitigation Methods
Server or network hardware failure	Redundant components are run in the servers and/or completely redundant servers are run. If any server or server component fails, the other server(s) take over automatically. These failover measures are tested every month. Network equipment is also redundant and is tested every six months or is running in an active-active state.
Database failure	The database servers are configured in a primary / mirror configuration with automatic fail over. The setup is tested every month when software patches are applied.
File redundancy	Files replicate between multiple locations so that nothing is lost in the event of a data center outage.
Data center failures. Off-site data backup.	Database and file systems are backed up daily to an alternate data center.
Internet line outage	Each data center is serviced by multiple high-speed Internet backbones.
Data center power outage	Data centers are equipped with uninterruptible power supplies and on-site backup generators.
Data center HVAC	Two cooling systems with N+1 air handlers are provided in the physical data center.
Data center physical security	Data centers are SAS 70 compliant. Security staff, biometric and physical locks control access. Video surveillance runs 24x7.

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

Methods for Ensuring the Authenticity of Student Work

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will use CheckMyWork – an online plagiarism-prevention tool to help teachers and students identify and correct inappropriate re-use of content. Following established guidelines, students will be required to run their essays and other authentic assessment documents through CheckMyWork before submitting these assignments to the teacher and attach the CheckMyWork report URL to their submissions. This gives students an opportunity to correct any unintentional plagiarism and allows teachers to see at a glance where academic integrity issues may exist.

CheckMyWork compares students' submitted work to the content found in internet archives, student papers, websites, journals, and publications. Submitted work is assigned a percentage score that reflects the percent of the work that matches other people's work. The CheckMyWork originality report shows the results of the comparison.

Once a document has been submitted to CheckMyWork, it is kept on file to check against other users' submissions. If someone else submits work from a different user account, that person will be notified that their work was plagiarized. If a student attempts to resubmit work after it has been submitted by another user, it will also be flagged as plagiarized. Students also have access to an online guide which outlines the steps required to check their work for plagiarism.

In addition to CheckMyWork, teachers will conduct curriculum-based assessments, via telephone conversation or through one-on-one LiveLesson sessions, as a quick and effective way to gather information on students' understanding of concepts. CBAs are used to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in student mastery of concepts and to validate a student's understanding of concepts against the collected formative data within the Education Management System. CBAs also assist teachers in verifying that students are doing their own work.

Methods for Proctoring Exams

Pennwood students will participate in state proficiency tests depending upon grade level. The School will set up in-person, proctored locations for state testing based on the student's home address. The School will proctor high-stakes exams in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Handbook for Assessment Coordinators. Test Administrators are required to complete the Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training (PSTAT). Pennwood acknowledges that Section 1744-A (2) encourages cyber schools and school districts to work cooperatively to accommodate students' needs in mandated testing. If needed, and where applicable, Pennwood will work with an intermediate unit or a school district to request reasonable access to facilities for the administration of standardized tests.

The variety of assessment forms also promotes security. A student's work will begin with a placement process, providing the teacher with a solid baseline against which to compare online assessments to follow. Frequent online quizzes, periodic online and offline unit tests, (some of which are randomized and/or timed), CBAs, and the standardized pre-, mid-, and post-tests will be compared against the student's portfolio samples to detect any mismatches. Teachers will be specially trained in telephone and email message questioning techniques to evaluate student mastery of concepts.

Students and parents suspected of inappropriate assessment behavior will be confronted immediately and subjected to disciplinary action as appropriate. All students will be required to sign the Honor Code indicating their understanding of the expectations of academic honesty. Cheating, plagiarizing, or other acts of academic dishonesty are directly counter to the principles of academic excellence and harm most those students who engage in such activities—they cheat themselves of the opportunity to fully develop their intellectual abilities. The Honor Code will serve to reinforce students' commitment to academic excellence, and all students must sign this Honor Code.

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

Hardware and Software

When a student enrolls, the appropriate equipment and technology will be ordered through the EMS. A loaner laptop with preloaded software, necessary to fully access and support the chosen curriculum, will be sent to the home, along with a Computer Setup Guide with instructions, contact information for technical support, and detailed information regarding the equipment.

We have included the technology specifications as they are being filled now in similar schools using the same curricular program. The makes/models may vary but each unit has comparable performance specifications. To ensure equitable access for students, each student will be provided with the following:

One laptop computer per student in grades K–12

- Hardware
  - Hewlett Packard 400-series model laptop or functional equivalent
  - Intel i3 processor or functional equivalent

- o   15.6-inch LCD LED display w/ integrated webcam

- o   4 GB DDR3-1600 DIMM RAM (or better, including up to 8 GB for later models)

- o   500 GB Hard drive (or better, including 256 GB Solid State Drive for later models)

- o   2 USB 2.0

- o   Integrated keyboard, webcam and trackpad

- o   Headset/Microphone combo input

- • Software

  - ○   Microsoft Windows 10 Professional or later

  - ○   Microsoft Office 2013 or later

  - ○   Microsoft Defender

  - ○   Web Filtering Software

  - ○   Custom School configurations

  - ○   Microsoft Endpoint Management to secure, manage and monitor devices deployed during 2021/2022 school year and beyond

  - ○   Unlimited Technical Support

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will ensure that each student has access to a school supplied printer in the first year of enrollment.

Student Technology Subsidy: Families arrange for Internet service for their students to attend school and are provided a subsidy to assist with the cost of internet. The School will reimburse families regularly so as not to cause financial hardship for them and so there is no disruption of schooling for the students.

For students who are unable to arrange for Internet service, the School will work with them to help with securing high speed Internet access. If the student lives in an area that receives limited or poor Internet connections, the school will work with the family on alternative methods for accessing the program online. A friendly technical representative is available to assist the student with setting up the equipment and provide any required logistical support. All laptops will be equipped with Internet security features.

Refreshing Student Technology

Pennwood has chosen to partner with an ESP with extensive experience supplying and refreshing technology for thousands of students throughout the country. As part of Pennwood's ESP partnership, an annual student technology refresh campaign will be completed where student computers that have been with the same student/household for three or more years are eligible to be refreshed. The ESP will process all returns from students as well and will work with families to coordinate the return including arranging for pick up from students' homes. There is no cost to the families for participating in the refresh process (all shipping and handling is included in the contract with the ESP).

Repairing and Replacing Technology

Computer risk assumption is covered through the Statement of Agreement with Pearson on a limited basis. Pearson currently provides inventory warehouse management services in support of virtual public

schools in 28 states. They incorporate replacement needs as part of their comprehensive computer technology offering for students.

They have sufficient stock to provide replacement equipment. They minimize any learning downtime for students and will often ship a replacement unit before the repair unit is received.

Several proprietary technology workflows will be used to expedite and streamline the process. Detailed quality assurance policies are in place for new and returned equipment to ensure each student receives a clean image when his/her equipment arrives. All protective packaging and form-fitting foam insulation for all computer shipments will be provided to minimize in-transit damage allowing for round trip protection for equipment. Sufficient safety stock will be maintained for exchanges and repairs to minimize downtime for students.

Internet Connections

It is important to the Board that barriers to technology and Internet do not prevent families from participating in this school. Pennwood will contract with Pearson, through the Statement of Agreement, to supply technology and a Student Technology Subsidy reimbursement to all households at no cost. Technology will remain the exclusive property of the ESP and will be returned if the student is no longer enrolled at the School or upon the termination of Pennwood Cyber Charter School's agreement with the ESP.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

II.1 Statement of Need

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

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

Need for Pennwood Cyber Charter School

In order to meet the need of career readiness and life-long learning for Pennsylvania students, the school will incorporate a three-week interim term, the C-Term, during which on track high school students can work on badging and micro-credentialing. Students on track in grades K-8 will work on Career Competency badges supported and developed by dedicated Pennwood staff and ESP support staff. All students participating in the C-Term will be supported by a Director of Specialized Programs, their support team, and the C-Term staff committee composed of a lead teacher at each grade level.

Badging and micro-credentialing sit at the heart of a new paradigm for the education industry. As careers lengthen, and the breadth of skills and knowledge requirements experience rapid growth, upskilling, reskilling, and lifelong learning are taking the stage front and center. Yet the traditional systems providing for these opportunities are fragile and outdated. They were designed as a one-size-fits-all route from academic to career success, moving from high school to college to workforce training and potentially a graduate degree.

Now these systems are struggling to address the needs of today's employers, as evidenced by the change in degree requirements listed in job postings. In a recent report from the Burning Glass Institute, as cited on the EMSI website, there is a measurable process of "down credentialing,"[31] which is the trend for middle and high-skilled occupations to list technical and social skills over degree requirements. This is a positive move, generating alternative options for upward mobility. However, the potential employees of these roles still need to be able to define and show the proficiencies of these desired skills.

In addition, traditional educational pathways do not support many of today's learners' needs, many of whom are either not in the position to or desirous of following a conventional degree pathway or who had to step out of the traditional degree pathway and could not afford to get back onto it. For example, according to the project "Degrees when Due" run by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), there are approximately 36 million Americans with "some college, but no degree."[32] In Pennsylvania alone, the number is around 121,000 potential completers. Using a unique credentialing system for these learners could get degree seekers into degree attainment situations and be used as a system for supporting the transfer and recognition of earlier or partial credentials earned with the addition of recognized Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) techniques.

---

[31] Source: https://www.economicmodeling.com/2022/02/09/employers-pulling-back-from-college-degrees-and-toward-skills-based-hiring/
[32] Source: https://degreeswhendue.com/#

Pennwood, through its C-Term, seeks to stay at the heart of a solutions-based environment for today's learners by designing and developing a credentialing system that is market-relevant, measurable, integrated, transparent, and equitable. Digital badges sit at the heart of that system and represent the visible and shareable format for micro-credentials or micro-learnings that can be one-off or integrated into more significant competency outcomes, including degrees and degree completions. They represent the attainment of salient skills, soft, technical, or specialized, that fosters learner development in a one-size-fits-one level of development. Further, when these systems are housed in partnerships with our more traditional institutions of education, they can be co-created with rigor and a level of oversight provided through the accreditation process, including the need to meet the standards as set out by local, State, and Federal regulations.

Another critical component of the C-Term is the opportunity for students that need additional support to focus on catching up during this time. Students, in consultation with their teachers, counselors and Learning Coaches, may use the C-Term to participate in credit recovery, remediation, and individualized tutoring. It is an opportunity to pause and commit time solely to improving their academic outcomes. Pennwood believes this intentional focus will lead to more positive outcomes for students most in need.

The C-Term will also offer test preparation at a critical time in the academic year where students will have the opportunity to practice and polish their academic and testing skills prior to taking state assessments. As state testing rates are a critical component of a School's success, Pennwood believes the C-Term offers a unique and highly needed time for students to prepare for state testing.

Finally, Pennwood recognizes the critical importance of school culture. Families across Pennsylvania will benefit from being a part of a community where they feel accepted and are excited about the unique educational opportunities available at Pennwood. The Engagement Badges will provide an opportunity across all grade levels to celebrate school culture. Engagement Badges will be awarded for LiveLesson Participation, Perfect Attendance, State Assessment Participation, Diagnostic Assessment Participation, Field Trip Participation, and Club Participation. There will be a celebration at the end of the year to recognize these achievements as well as acknowledgments throughout the school year. Improving school culture and student engagement is an area of high need across Pennsylvania schools and Pennwood is committed to creating a dynamic school culture with high student and parent engagement.

Teacher Satisfaction

School culture and teacher satisfaction are important factors and regular surveys are conducted to understand and support school staff needs. Across all schools supported by Pearson, recent (2021-2022) survey trends highlight the following:
- Overall Engagement factor has an average rating of 84% favorable.
- The highest rated sentiment is My Manager (92% average favorable rating), specifically the statements:
    - "My manager is a great role model for my school." (93% average favorable rating)
    - "I feel comfortable speaking with my manager about my needs." (93% average favorable rating)
    - "I am satisfied working with my immediate manager." (93% average favorable rating)
- Very high favorability around student support and the impact that staff feel they have on their students in the Service & Quality Focus factor (92% average favorable rating), specifically the statement "My school provides a safe environment for students to learn." (96% average favorable rating).
- Teacher retention rates are strong across these schools! 90.4% of teachers returned for the 2021-2022 School Year; the prior school year welcomed back 92.7% of teachers. Teacher

turnover rates are about half of the national average of 16% according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

- 95% of newly hired teachers say they feel motivated to exceed expectations at their school and they are proud to work at their school.
- 93% of newly hired teachers say they feel welcome, build good relationships with peers, had quality training and a supportive mentor.
- Teachers at Pennwood will have a great deal of support in building relationships and engaging students, which will allow them more time to teach. The inclusion of the Student Engagement Specialist team led by the Director of Specialized Programs and the Manager of Engagement will help to ease some of the administrative burdens placed on teachers. The teachers will build relationships and teach content to students while attendance, truancy, field trips, and other engagement activities will be handled by the Engagement team. This should increase teacher satisfaction.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will serve students throughout the state who are eligible to enroll under Pennsylvania law, including general education students, students with learning or cognitive disabilities, at-risk students, accelerated students, and English learners. It is anticipated that the school may also serve highly mobile students and will help these students be successful during the time period that a full-time virtual school is needed.

Pennwood is dedicated to providing a high-quality, full-time virtual option to children of all backgrounds. The Board is committed to equity, and the population of students who will be supported by the School is expected to mirror the demographics of other cyber charter schools in the state. Therefore, based on the most recently available data, the School anticipates over 45% of Pennwood students will meet federal free and reduced lunch guidelines.[33] Furthermore, Pennwood anticipates 15% will be Black, 14% Hispanic, 5% Multiple Races, and 62% White[34]. Demographic projections are based on cyber charter school demographics last reported on PDE's website.

Through this unique model, the School will be tailor-made for a diverse array of students who may benefit from a quality option to the traditional brick-and-mortar classroom, including:

- Children in both urban and rural communities who lack access to challenging classes and Advanced Placement®(AP)/Honors courses within their current existing public school options;
- Students desiring a unique educational model focused on career readiness and lifelong learning
- Students whose families seek more involvement in their child's education;
- Students who are medically homebound due to illness or disability;
- Students who are immunocompromised and are concerned about health conditions outside of the home environment;
- Exceptional students who are far ahead of or far behind their peers in school;
- Students pursuing artistic or athletic interests or career development opportunities requiring a flexible schedule;
- Students who require a flexible school schedule;
- Students with special learning needs;
- Students who have been bullied;
- Students who are at risk of academic failure, who may particularly benefit from intensive, personalized instruction; and

---

[33] Source: https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/LoanCanLowIncome/Pages/PublicSchools.aspx
[34] Source: https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

- Students who desire a comprehensive, robust full-time cyber school experience.

While full-time cyber schools are not the answer for every student, they are an important solution for a growing number of students and families in Pennsylvania. With the establishment of this School, more students will be able to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and practical career skill development. Other cyber learning options are currently available in Pennsylvania, but they lack the focus on career readiness and badging offering students a new way to personalize their education to meet their specific needs.

As discussed in the School Design section of this application, Pennwood's model focuses on academic outcomes. Pennwood plans to incorporate an extended school year model and unique badging program to increase engagement, motivate students, and improve academic outcomes for students throughout Pennsylvania. In addition, the School plans to incorporate ties to the community by offering dynamic field trips during the C-Term and throughout the school year. Pennwood will also focus on, real-world applications, project-based learning, and career- and college-readiness. Pennwood recognizes the importance of future ready skills and is leveraging its ESP's partnership with Drexel University 's Goodwin College to offer Career and College Readiness Modules in Cultivating Contributing Communities for students in grades 9-12.

Data was gathered by Faethm[35] from the state of Pennsylvania; Faethm is a company that produces work predictive analytics through market-leading data, insights, and AI capabilities. The data gathered from the state was based on a five-year time horizon and determined that emerging technology will result in the creation of 245,000 new jobs. The top 15 of these new jobs are shown in the graphic below.
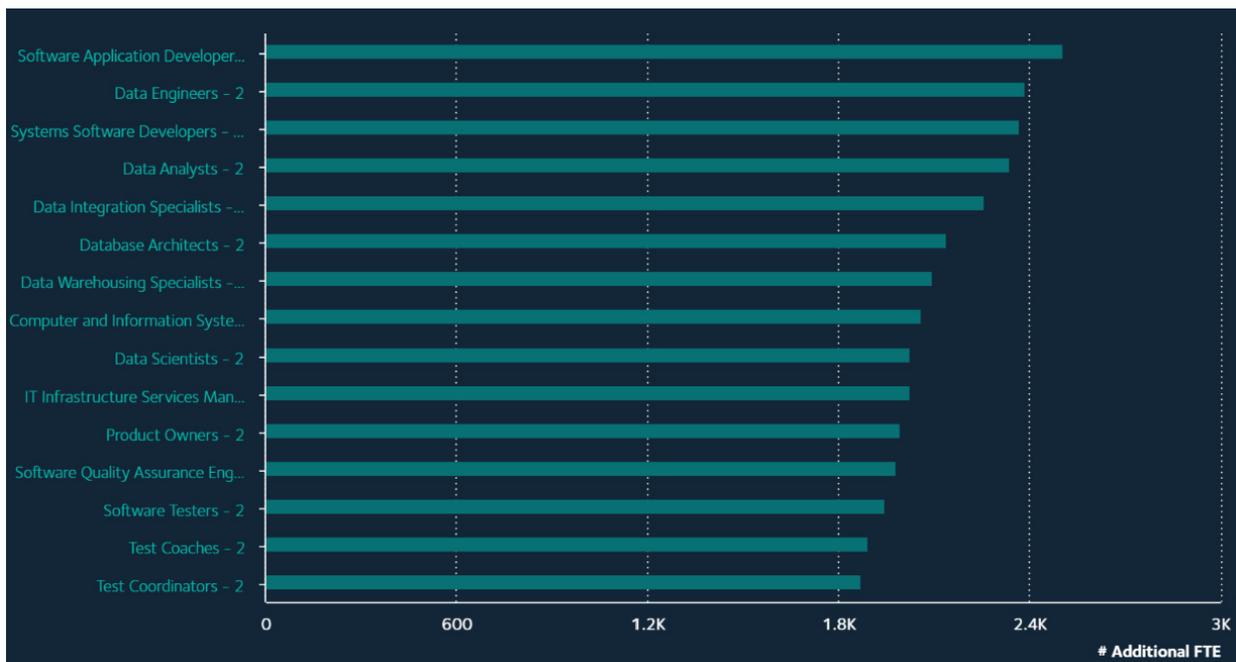

Figure 15. Pennwood Cyber Charter School's focus on career readiness will prepare students for the anticipated top 15 new jobs in emerging technologies.

---

[35] Source: https://www.faethm.ai/about-us

Evidence of Support

The Board has been tracking the interest in cyber schooling expressed by families throughout Pennsylvania. Despite current cyber options, there is still need across the state for additional cyber schooling options, and specifically this unique educational model, as evidenced by the thousands of families expressing interest. In the last five years, over 73,000 families in Pennsylvania have inquired about cyber school options. The figure below illustrates the location of the families who contacted Pearson's enrollment team interested in a cyber school in Pennsylvania.

Our proposed school, Pennwood Cyber Charter School, will meet a need that cannot be met by current options. The School will offer students in all grades the opportunity to focus on career readiness, power skills, remediation, technology, and wellness, with the ability to earn badges and real life skills. There is also an extended school year where students can specifically work on these skills and/or work to recover credit to get them back on track with their educational plans in addition to state testing preparation. Furthermore, Pennwood will be focused on teacher satisfaction by offering another month of pay, competitive salaries, and the opportunity to participate in unique professional development opportunities.

Pennwood has also demonstrated, through attendance at both online and in-person information sessions throughout the state, an interest in this innovative cyber charter model. The support for Pennwood is not only evidenced by the statement of support signatures, but also from the letters of support from community-based institutions serving both K-12 and higher education (provided in Appendix G). Pennwood received support from teachers, parents/guardians and students, and citizens residing in 39 counties across Pennsylvania. Based on our partner's previous support of schools in Pennsylvania, the number of completed pre-enrollment forms is not determinative of total future enrollment outcomes. Our intended partner has a track record of demonstrated marketing and enrollment support for their partner schools. Such robust outreach efforts to achieve enrollment targets include direct mail, information sessions, website, media outreach, word of mouth referrals, and online outreach. In its agreement, with the Pennwood Board, Pearson has committed to providing the proper marketing mix in order to achieve enrollment goals and provide sustainable growth year-over-year.
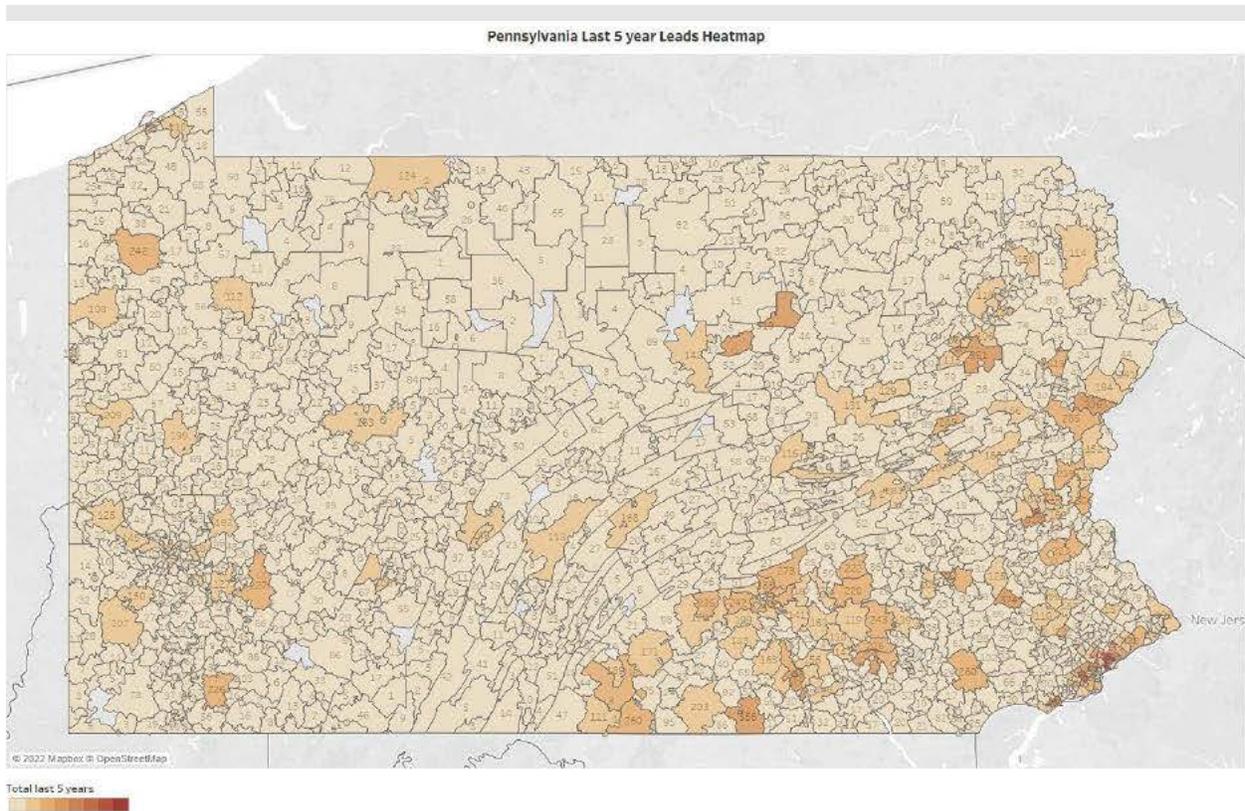
Pennsylvania Last 5 year Leads Heatmap

Total last 5 years

Figure 16. Over 73,000 families in Pennsylvania have inquired about cyber school options in the past five years.

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

Purpose for the Pennwood Cyber Charter School Model

During the 2020-2021 pandemic year, schools used emergency learning as a response to a healthcare crisis; however, student enrollment in cyber public schools has been gradually increasing years prior. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), enrollment has increased from just under 200,000 in 2013-14 to 293,711 in the 2019-20 school year.[36]

Key findings from a RAND Corporation Study showed that about two in ten districts have already adopted, plan to adopt, or are considering adopting virtual school as part of their district portfolio after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. District leaders cited reasons related to student and parent demand for continuing various forms of online instruction in future years.[37]

---

[36] Thompson | AP, C. (2021, August 12). *Pandemic Spurs boom in virtual offerings for US schools*. The Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/pandemic-spurs-boom-in-virtual-offerings-for-us-schools/2021/08/12/ece539c8-fb92-11eb-911c-524bc8b68f17_story.html

[37] Schwartz, Heather L., David Grant, Melissa Kay Diliberti, Gerald P. Hunter, and Claude Messan Setodji, Remote Learning Is Here to Stay: Results from the First American School District Panel Survey. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA956-1.html.)

Support for the need to expose students to online learning is evident in the 2015 article, *The Effectiveness of Online Learning: Beyond No Significant Difference and Future Horizons*, when Tuan Nguyen states ".... about 92% of all distance and online education studies find that distance and online education is at least as effective, if not better, than traditional education."[38]

Schools partnered with Pearson have many positive outcomes regarding student performance. Recent research from an independent study conducted on schools partnered with Pearson shows that there is no statistical difference in the performance of students in cyber schools on state math and reading tests and the performance of students in brick-and-mortar schools when matched for student mobility and other demographic data.[39]

High-quality Teaching: Teachers will be equipped with skills and technology to maximize student learning. Research, focusing on online learning, echoes the critical importance of teacher quality and preparation. In November 2015, Mary F. Rice, Theron (Bill) East and Daryl F. Mellard published a study (Teacher Preparation and Promising Practices in Online Learning[40]) which analyzed effective teacher preparation and practice for the online learning environment.

In the study, "...administrators indicated teacher preparation and ongoing support (e.g., coaching and professional development) was very critical. In fact, they agreed this topic was one of the most critical of all topics covered in the forum. Administrators considered teacher preparation and support very important because they believed that teachers are the most important component of successful online learning once devices are in students' hands and working properly."

Through Pennwood's partnership with Pearson, Pennwood teachers will have access to an award-winning Professional Learning model.[41] Through this model, teachers will gain an understanding of their role as facilitator, distinguish changes to the online environment and its impact on student learning, and adapt to those changes while transitioning to their role as an online instructor at Pennwood. Throughout each level of professional learning, teachers will engage in reflection opportunities and share their reflections with colleagues and school leaders. According to Rick DuFour and Douglas Reeves in their article, Professional Learning Communities Still Work (If Done Right) (October 2015),[42] educators "...prefer professional development that helps them plan and improve their instruction, is teacher-driven, includes hands-on strategies relevant to their classrooms, is sustained over time, and recognizes that teachers are professionals with valuable insights." Teachers are most satisfied when they are part of a learning community focusing on lesson planning, using data to personalize instruction, designing engaging content, and ensuring that all curriculum is aligned to state and national standards.

[38] Nguyen, Tuan (2015). "The Effectiveness of Online Learning: Beyond No Significant Difference and Future Horizons," MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 11(2). http://jolt.merlot.org/Vol11no2/Nguyen_0615.pdf
[39] Gatti, G. (2018). A comparison study of Connections Academy Schools to matched brick and mortar and virtual schools, examining the types of students who attend K–12 virtual school and the effects on performance of a highly mobile student body. Efficacy & Research Report. London: Pearson.
[40] http://centerononlinelearning.org/wp-content/uploads/Superintendent_Topic_7_Summary_November2015.pdf
[41] In April 2015, the Pearson Professional Development Model was recognized with a silver award for Best Practices for Distance Learning Programming by the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA). In May 2016 Pearson was recognized as a Codie Award finalist for Best Professional Learning Solution for K-20 Faculty and Administrative Staff.
[42] http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2015/10/02/professional-learning-communities-still-work-if-done.html

Timely and Actionable Feedback: The unique ability of a cyber school teacher to communicate one-on-one with students and offer timely and actionable feedback is key to student success in a cyber learning environment. As noted in the December 2020 article, Providing Quality Feedback in Virtual Learning Environments, "By providing effective feedback, you will have a powerful method for keeping students on track to meeting their personal, professional, and academic goals."[43] Professional learning topics will delve deeply into ways that teachers can reach students individually at Pennwood, so that they are receiving timely and actionable feedback. Teachers at Pennwood Cyber will use collaboration in professional learning to discuss topics such as "...the main purpose of feedback is to improve the student's ability to perform tasks they have not yet attempted...In other words, we need to start from where the learner is, not where we would like the learner to be. We need to use the information we obtain from looking at the student's work—even though that information may be less than perfect—and give feedback that will move the student's learning forward."[44] In his 2012 article, "Seven Keys to Effective Feedback," Grant Wiggins notes, helpful feedback is goal-referenced, tangible and transparent, actionable, user-friendly (specific and personalized), timely, ongoing, and consistent."[45] These qualities and instructional strategies are characteristic of the type of feedback that teachers at Pennwood will provide to students.

Personalized Instruction: Students clearly benefit from instruction that is personalized in terms of pace, content, sequence, and style. In a study published in 2016,[46] students in a developmental math class experienced between a 13% and 27% increase in course completion using personalized learning in a digital platform. Robert Marzano and Michael D. Toth explain that "Within classrooms, there should be ample evidence of students wrestling with new content as they build the stamina required to reach higher levels of thinking. Without the opportunity to struggle with a problem or decision, for instance, students may attain surface-level knowledge of a concept but be unable to utilize that knowledge in meaningful ways."[47] A goal of personalization via cyber instruction is for the student to demonstrate increased content knowledge and critical thinking. Instruction is personalized for every student, every day, and professional learning supports teachers in implementing instructional practices that maximize student performance. Students will work together on collaborative projects as well.

A 2022 Canadian study conducted over the course of the pandemic found that students benefited from the more personalized experience they had while learning from home virtually; the learning environment was less overwhelming, so the focus increased on academics.[48] Online learning gave some children autonomy, and a break from the business of curriculum for children to work independently on projects.

---

[43] Shaw, A. (2020, December 17). *Providing quality feedback in virtual learning environments*. Wiley Education Services. https://edservices.wiley.com/quality-feedback-in-virtual-learning/

[44] http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/111001/chapters/Setting-Objectives-and-Providing-Feedback.aspx

[45] http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept12/vol70/num01/Seven-Keys-to-Effective-Feedback.aspx

[46] "Using personalized learning, a developmental math professor increases her course passing rate". Website blog. Pearson Education Blog. Pearson Education, 2016.

[47] www.marzanocenter.com/files/Teaching-for-Rigor-20140318.pdf

[48] Burke, Anne. (2022, August 1). How some children prospered in pandemic online learning. PhysOrg. https://phys.org/news/2022-08-children-prospered-pandemic-online.html

Data-Driven Instruction: Research on data-driven decision-making states: "…educators should consult and factor in multiple sources and types of student data to get a more complete view of student progress or achievement." These additional sources of data may be formal (e.g., chapter tests, class projects, or performance assessments) or informal (e.g., class discussions, homework assignments, or formative assessments). Looking at a broader array of data can help teachers avoid putting too much weight on a single measure of student performance and, therefore, reduce the risk of making inaccurate and invalid decisions about student learning and teaching effectiveness."[49] Training and professional development will guide teachers through this process and continuously seek ways to ensure teachers are comfortable with the importance of using data to personalize instruction. At Pennwood, teachers will be provided tools and clear guidance on how to analyze and use student performance data to provide targeted instruction, intervention, lesson modifications, remediation, and enrichment.

Parent Involvement: As part of their ongoing work to rethink the high school experience, the XQ Institute shared in a November 2020 post that there is substantial evidence that shows a strong correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement. From that same research, the data showed that parental involvement improves graduation rates and college enrollment.[50] In an article published in 2010, titled "Parent Involvement and Student Academic Performance: A Multiple Mediational Analysis," in the *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, authors David R. Topor, Susan P. Keane, Terri L. Shelton, and Susan D. Calkins noted that, "Parent involvement in a child's education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance. Results indicated a statistically significant association between parent involvement and a child's academic performance, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence."[51]

Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan researched the effects of parental involvement on student academic achievement in their working paper published in 2011, *Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature*, and found, "Parental participation and cooperation in their child's educational affairs is related to several outcomes deemed important in educational arenas: increased student achievement and academic performance, stronger self-regulatory skills, fewer discipline problems, better study habits, more positive attitudes toward school, improved homework habits and work orientation, and higher educational aspirations (Aeby, Thyer, & Carpenter-Aeby, 1999; Galloway & Sheridan, 1994; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Ma, 1999; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Trusty, 1999)."[52]

There are multiple ways for parents to be involved in education. In the cyber learning model, parents often act as the Learning Coach and are therefore directly involved in their child's education. A Stanford study points out one avenue of parent involvement and its impact. The study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in student's I.Q. scores. Another study showed that parental involvement increased students' motivation to learn including school engagement, goal

[49] Mertler, Craig A. Introduction to Data-Driven Educational Decision Making (2014), http://www.ascd.org/publications/ books/sf114082/chapters/Introduction_to_Data-Driven_Educational_Decision_Making.aspx
[50] XQ, T. (2020, November 24). *The relationship between parental and family involvement and student success*. Rethink Together. https://xqsuperschool.org/rethinktogether/relationship-between-parental-and-family-involvement-and-academic-achievement.
[51] Topor, David R., Keane, Susan P., Shelton, Terri L., & Calkins, Susan D. (2010). Parent Involvement and Student Academic Performance: A Multiple Mediational Analysis, Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 38:3, 183-197 http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2010.486297
[52] Semke C. A., & Sheridan, S. M. (2011). Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature (R2Ed Working Paper No. 2011-1). Retrieved from the National Center for Research on Rural Education website: http://r2ed.unl.edu

achievement, and even motivation to read.[53] At Pennwood, parents will be closely involved in their child's education in partnership with their child's teacher.

In addition to Pennwood's intentional focus on personalized instruction, data-driven results, and parent satisfaction, the Board firmly believes its unique career readiness and badging model will serve a critical need in Pennsylvania for families desiring or needing a full-time, public cyber school option. Pennwood will provide students with the capacity to be productive, global citizens who are armed with real life skills and credentials they can take with them beyond the classroom. With an extended school year, a strong partner, and additional staff support in place, the Pennwood Board is confident it will deliver a high-quality learning experience for all students needing this unique model.

II.2 School Demographics

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

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

Enrollment Projections for Five Years

The table below shows the enrollment projections for the first five years. Per the Charter School BEC, 24 P.S. §17-1701-A, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will report to the PDE an increase or a decrease of 30% or more in its anticipated enrollment as set in this application.

Year	Grade	Enrollment
1	K-12	1,800
2	K-12	3,000
3	K-12	4,500
4	K-12	6,200
5	K-12	8,200

Ultimate Enrollment Goal by Year 5 of the Initial Charter

Pennwood's enrollment goal is 8,200 students by Year 5. Pennwood Cyber Charter School has a responsible plan for school growth (balancing the desire to serve as many students as possible each academic year with the quality and academic focus of the school) that positions both the students and the school for future success. Pennwood hopes to responsibly grow from 1,800 students (Year 1) to 8,200 students or more in its initial Charter term (Year 5) through a combination of parent outreach, comparatively high student retention rates (cyber school retention rates tend to be lower than brick-and-mortar schools), and word-of-mouth recommendations and referrals by current families

Grades Served

---

[53] Gonzalez-DeHass, A. R., Willems , P. P., & Doan Holbein, M. F. (2005). Examining the relationship between parental involvement and student motivation. Educational Psychology Review, 17, 2, 99- 123.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will serve students in grades K-12 in Year 1 and throughout the remaining projected years.

Entry Age for Kindergarten Students and Beginners

For students in Kindergarten, Pennwood will enroll students who meet the admission age that is determined by their resident school district.

Pennwood will follow 24 P.S. § 13-1304 Admission of Beginners, which states, "Admission shall be limited to beginners who have attained the age of five years and seven months before the first day of September if they are to be admitted in the fall, and to those who have attained the age of five years and seven months before the first day of February if they are to be admitted at the beginning of the second semester."

Projected Number of Students Per Grade/Grouping

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
K	40	75	110	220	330
1	50	100	170	260	380
2	70	120	230	300	430
3	85	150	250	350	480
4	110	170	270	400	535
5	120	200	300	430	585
6	135	220	340	480	630
7	150	250	370	520	685
8	170	270	420	570	740
9	190	315	470	600	785
10	215	350	500	650	835
11	225	380	520	690	885
12	240	400	550	730	900
Total	**1,800**	**3,000**	**4,500**	**6,200**	**8,200**

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

Community or Region for Pennwood Cyber Charter School

The Central York region of Pennsylvania was selected as the physical location for the school's administrative office. It is a suburban setting located near Route 30 and exit 22 (N. George St.) of I-83. A site survey was conducted, and 555 Ryan Road in York, PA, was selected.

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

Rationale for Location

As one of York County's fastest growing residential areas, this location creates opportunities for business and professional services, easy access for the school's administrative staff and visiting families and

provides access to eateries and retail for staff. York County is also centrally located to promote opportunities for professional development, Board training, and interactions with students and their families.

The building contains upper-level suites with signage and road visibility. The property was developed as part of a "Planned Residential Development" and allows most uses that are permitted under the Office and Commercial Zoning Districts in Manchester Township. This site will require some remodeling but has ample windows on both sides and is in a newer area with building signage opportunity.

Other Suitable Locations

A property survey was conducted for the York, Pennsylvania area, and two building sites were identified: the previously mentioned 555 Ryan Road site and also a site at 3532 Concord Road in York. This secondary location is a well-established site where the existing build-out suits the school's need and requires less remodeling but was in a slightly less desirable location.

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

Unique Demographic Characteristics of the Student Population

Of the students who attend a Pearson-supported school in Pennsylvania, over 44% met the federal free and reduced lunch guidelines. Twenty-two percent are black, 15% are Hispanic, 8% are multiple races, and 54% are white. The Kids Count Data Center reported 15.4% of students with disabilities in Pennsylvania in 2017-2018 school year (the most recent year for which statistics were available)[54], and the National Center for Education Statistics reported 12% of students with disabilities and 10% of English learners nationally[55]. The Pennsylvania State Data Center provided 18.6% as the percentage of Special Education students for the 2021-22 school year.[56] It is anticipated that students from across the state will enroll in the School, and that the student demographics of Pennwood Cyber Charter School will mirror those of Pennsylvania. For planning and staffing purposes, an initial percentage of 16% was used as the anticipated percentage of Special Education students for Pennwood in its first year of operation, with an escalation rate of 1% per year, up to 20% in year 5. A steady 1% was used as the basis for the anticipated share of EL students, based on the EL populations of other PA cyber schools.

Primary Languages Spoken by Student Population

The population of Pennsylvania is diverse, and languages include Spanish, Chinese, Yiddish, Pennsylvania Dutch, and German, among others. According to Data USA, the most common foreign languages spoken in Pennsylvania are Spanish (634,935 speakers), Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese) (90,890 speakers), and Yiddish, Pennsylvania Dutch or other West Germanic Languages (73,540 speakers).[57] The primary language spoken at the School will be English.

---

[54] Source: https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/2724-students-with-disabilities--number-and-percent-of-students-enrolled-in-special-education?loc=40&loct=2#detailed/2/any/true/1740,1639/any/9736
[55] Source: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d21/tables/dt21_204.27.asp
[56] Source: https://penndata.hbg.psu.edu/penndata/documents/BSEReports/Data%20Preview/2021-2022/Speced_Quick_Report_PA_Final_2021-2022.pdf
[57] Source: https://datausa.io/profile/geo/pennsylvania/

Pennwood will partner with vendors to provide families with written and oral translation services, as needed. During the enrollment process, the school will use Language Line to provide oral translation services to families, as well as when other meetings or conversations with the family are needed. School staff will be able to request written translation for important webmail communications, class communications, and other relevant resources.

II.3 District Relations/Evidence of Support

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

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

Evidence of Sustainable Support

The success of Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be founded on its ability to provide its students and parents with a learning environment that meets their individual needs. In this application, Pennwood has demonstrated support sufficient to sustain and maintain the school as an on-going entity. The Board has demonstrated long-term, sustained support for the School by receiving multiple letters of support and 290 signatures, as shown in Appendix G. Pennwood is confident in its ability to fulfill its enrollment projections through its partnership with an experienced enrollment team.

The Board has prioritized creating and sustaining partnerships with organizations that complement the school's emphasis on life-long learning, technology, and career readiness. We have attached letters of support from Pennsylvania-based organizations, policymakers, and institutions that Pennwood Cyber Charter School will work with during the planning stage and beyond to ensure our unique school model is reinforced with extra-curricular activities and professional development opportunities.

The Board represents a group of passionate education advocates who live across the state. The Board brings a wealth of experiences to Pennwood Cyber Charter School and has secured support letters (included in Appendix G) from the following individuals and organizations:

- David H. Rowe, State Representative, 85th Legislative District
- Carnegie Science Center, Pittsburg, PA
- Gettysburg Community Theatre, Gettysburg, PA
- NuMoola, Pittsburg, PA
- Andrew Lewis, State Representative, 105th Legislative District
- Greg Rothman, State Representative, 87th Legislative District
- Mike Regan, State Senator, 31st District
- Robert Mercuri, State Representative, 28th District
- Joshua Kail, State Representative, 15th District
- Joe Kerwin, State Representative, 125th District
- Kate Klunk, State Representative, 169th District

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

Notifications to Districts

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be a state-wide cyber charter school open to every school-age student in Pennsylvania. The Board has physically mailed a letter to superintendents of all 500 school

districts in Pennsylvania and emailed them notifying them of Pennwood's application and intention to open for the 2023-2024 school year upon approval by the PDE. The letter (attached in Appendix H) also requests the opportunity to partner with the school districts to ensure we best serve the needs of the students from their district who enroll.

C. What efforts will be implemented to maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts? Note: Please attach letters of intent that were sent to all school districts from which the cyber charter school could reasonably expect to draw students.

Efforts to Maintain a Collaborative Relationship with School Districts

In the letter to superintendents of all 500 school districts (provided in Appendix H), the Board has shared its intention to partner with school districts to ensure students from their districts are best served. For example, Pennwood may establish relationships with individual school districts on matters concerning students with learning or cognitive disabilities and students intending to play sports or engage in extra-curricular activities in their resident district. In addition, the Pennwood Board President reached out personally to the Central York Superintendent to demonstrate our desire to form a collaborative relationship with the district in which Pennwood desires to reside.

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

Community Backing for Pennwood Cyber Charter School

The success of Pennwood Cyber Charter School and its students is predicated on the support of communities. Support for Pennwood from individual and organizational partners is reflected in the collected support letters (included in Appendix G). As previously noted, The Board has secured support letters (included in Appendix G) from the following individuals and organizations:

- David H. Rowe, State Representative, 85th Legislative District
- Carnegie Science Center, Pittsburg, PA
- Gettysburg Community Theatre, Gettysburg, PA
- NuMoola, Pittsburg, PA
- Andrew Lewis, State Representative, 105th Legislative District
- Greg Rothman, State Representative, 87th Legislative District
- Mike Regan, State Senator, 31st District
- Robert Mercuri, State Representative, 28th District
- Joshua Kail, State Representative, 15th District
- Joe Kerwin, State Representative, 125th District
- Kate Klunk, State Representative, 169th District

In addition to the letters of support listed above, Pennwood has received 290 statements of support across the state, representing more than half of the state's counties and has secured support of Drexel University through its partnership with Pearson.

III. GOVERNANCE

III.1 Profile of Founding Coalition

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

A. Describe the makeup of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter, including the names of the founders, their background and experiences, and references for each.

Charter Applicant Group

The Pennsylvania non-profit corporation, Pennwood Cyber Charter School, is the applicant submitting this charter application and will govern the school and hold the charter. The group is incorporated as a non-profit corporation and is not a subsidiary of another entity, or in any way connected with, or under the control of another entity. As public officials, members of the Pennwood Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees will be subject to the provisions of the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, 65 P.S. §1101-1113 ("Ethics Act") and will file Statements of Financial Interest by May 1 each year. In addition, as members of the Board of Trustees they will have legal obligations under the Charter School Law and the Public School Code. The Pennwood Board of Trustees will be a good and effective steward of public money and provide independent governance of the school's administrators.

Pennwood will be capable, in terms of support and planning, to provide comprehensive learning experiences to all its students as an independent public cyber school operating as a non-profit entity with an established and effective Board of Trustees. As evidenced in this application and appendices, the Board has real and substantial authority over educational decisions, the operations of the school, and all staff, including teachers.

The Board members are parents, educators, and business and community leaders who are committed to bringing an innovative public cyber charter school for students in grades K-12 to Pennsylvania. Current Board members have unique skills and expertise in cyber education, technology, charter school administration, charter school insurance, and financial analysis. Additionally, at least one parent of an enrolled student will be recruited to join the Board. These qualifications will help ensure the success of the School and the effective representation of key stakeholders.

Names, Background, and References

The Board consists of five members. Each Board member brings unique skills and expertise to support Pennwood Cyber Charter School and make decisions regarding the operation of the School, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be a statewide school and as such the Board members have community ties across the state. There is a wide range of expertise on the Board demonstrating the capacity for initial start-up operations and the successful launch of the school for fall of 2023 and beyond.

Dr. Joyce Good

Dr. Good serves as the CEO of GoodtoGreat Consulting where she assists school districts in reviewing cyber programs and creating effective online experiences. She is also an adjunct professor at Lebanon Valley College where she designed and teaches the program for an Online Teaching Endorsement. Previously, Dr. Good served as the vice president of instructional development at Commonwealth Charter Academy where she oversaw the creation of an

Adaptive Learning engine that harnessed Artificial Intelligence technology to drive personalized instruction to every learner. She has a long history as a public school teacher and administrator. Dr. Good has served as a school board member for 18 years for the Pequea Valley School District and has presented at numerous conferences including the Pennsylvania Technology Expo and Conference (PETEC). She is also a noted educational software designer, having designed education applications such as IEP etc., a program to create IEPs, NORAs and Gifted IEPs; Grades etc., an online gradebook; discipline, student-scheduling, and attendance software; and Teacher Webpages and DataBlender.

Dr. Good has a BS in Elementary Education from West Chester University, PA; a Master of Education from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD; an Instructional Technology Specialist Certification from Penn State University; and a Doctor of Education from University of Delaware, DE. In addition, Dr. Good has a Supervisory Certificate and a Principal Certificate (K-12) from Temple University, PA.

Stephanie Haas Thoeny

Ms. Thoeny is currently an account executive at the Sovereign Insurance Group where she manages accounts for charter schools, oversees new partnerships, and serves as a charter school practice leader. She brings expertise in insurance issues specifically related to charter schools to the Pennwood Board.

Ms. Thoeny holds a BA in English from Villanova University, PA. She has also served on the board of directors of the 1789 Fund and the Blue White Scholarship Foundation. She volunteers with Habitat for Humanity, Covenant House, and Youth on a Mission.

David Hardy

Mr. Hardy is a distinguished senior fellow with the Commonwealth Foundation where he previously served as a senior advisor and executive director. He was previously the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Boys' Latin of Philadelphia Charter School, an all-boys college preparatory high school with the specific mission of increasing African American male college completion rates. As CEO, he led the school to the highest male college matriculation rate (87%) of any public, charter, private or parochial high school in Pennsylvania. Mr. Hardy was also the Executive Director of Fairhill Community High School and provided financial expertise to the Community Academy of Philadelphia Charter School.

Mr. Hardy has a BA in English from Yankton College, SD, and a Fundraising Certificate from the University of Pennsylvania, College of General Studies. He has also served as a trustee for Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools, Ad Prima Charter School, Independence Mission Schools, Center for Education Reform, National Alliance for Public Charter School, Philadelphia Black Alliance for Educational Options, among other organizations.

C. Tyler Havey

Mr. Havey is a partner in the law firm of Gordon & Rees, Scully, Mansukhani in Harrisburg, PA. Mr. Havey is an experienced legal expert in complex litigation matters spanning insurance, construction, commercial litigation, First Amendment, will contests, and probate disputes. Mr. Havey has served as an executive board member of the Philadelphia Association of Defense Counsel, and as member of the board of directors for the Main Line Art Center. He is also a board member of The Widener Journal of Public Law.

Mr. Havey holds a J.D. from Widener University School of Law, and a BS from the University of Scranton.

Marc LeBlond

Mr. LeBlond currently serves as the director of policy for the EdChoice Foundation, where he distills numerous education bills for a lawmaker audience; drafts education-related legislation; briefs Pennsylvania senators and representatives; testifies before PA policy and education committees; and works closely with charter school leaders. Mr. LeBlond has also served on the board of directors for Pennsylvania Families for Education Choice. He brings experience in education policy and finance to the Pennwood Board in addition to a strong record of supporting charter schools.

Mr. LeBlond holds a BA in Economics and a BS in Business Administration, Finance concentration, from Eastern Connecticut State University; a Master of Arts in Public Policy Studies from Trinity College, CT; and a certificate from Georgetown University, McCourt School of Public Policy, Edunomics Lab.

References

We have included references for the Board members in Appendix I following the resumes.

B. Discuss how the group came together, as well as any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups. Provide information on the manner in which community groups are involved in the charter school planning process.

History of Founding Group

As a senior policy analyst, Board Chair Marc LeBlond has seen firsthand the need for other educational options for students to be prepared for today's jobs. Mr. LeBlond acted as the incorporator in August 2022. He was involved in the development of this application for submission. Mr. LeBlond has continued to gather other interested Pennsylvanians who want to bring this innovative educational option to students in the state. These individuals offer qualifications and skills that will result in an independent and effective Board, as illustrated by their resumes in Appendix I.

Partnership Arrangements with Existing Schools, Educational Programs, Businesses, Non-Profits & Entities

Pennwood Cyber Charter School, through its partnership with Pearson, will partner with Drexel University's Goodwin College of Professional Studies. Through its Career and College Readiness Modules, eligible Pennwood students from across the state will be able to participate in this unique offering. Drexel is a comprehensive global R1-level research university with a unique model of experiential learning that combines academic rigor with one of the nation's premier cooperative education programs. Drexel University fulfills its founder's vision of preparing each new generation of students for productive professional and civic lives while also focusing the University's collective expertise on solving society's greatest problems. Drexel is an academically comprehensive and globally engaged urban research university, dedicated to advancing knowledge and society and to providing every student with a valuable, rigorous, experiential, technology-infused education, enriched by the nation's premier cooperative education program.[58]

---

[58] Source: https://drexel.edu/about

In addition, Pennwood has begun to establish relationships with educational organizations across the state as evidenced by its letters of support and seeks to continue to foster these relationships throughout Pennwood's charter.

C. Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

Plans for Further Recruitment of Founders or School Organizers

The Board has developed an ongoing recruitment strategy for identifying innovative, experienced and invested individuals that will support the School's mission and vision. Board members intend to utilize contacts within the education field, Pennwood parents, as well as professional and civic organizations to continuously expand the potential pool of eligible Board candidates.   Any adult individual may seek appointment to the Board, with the exception of employees of Pennwood, Pearson or any person who has been convicted of a felony or has a conflict of interest. The Board will aim to have a parent of an enrolled student on the Board once the school is open, and continuously seek to have diverse community leaders vetted and prepared for Board service, ensuring continuity of the school's strategic initiatives, academic success and financial health.

III.2 Governance

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

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

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

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

Management Organization of the School

The Pennsylvania non-profit corporation, Pennwood Cyber Charter School, is the applicant submitting this charter application and will govern the School and will hold the charter. The Board of Trustees currently consists of five members, representing education, business, and the community. The Board will employ all staff including the CEO, Principal(s) and teachers. The Principal(s) will report to the CEO. The application and all appendices have been reviewed by Pennwood's board counsel.

The operating structure of Pennwood will be similar to a traditional educational environment, with the CEO implementing the policies and procedures of the Board and the Principal(s) supervising the teaching staff. The CEO will be responsible for the instructional leadership, curriculum implementation, personnel decisions, facilities management, and any special staffing needs. The CEO will manage the teachers ensuring that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. The CEO will be responsible for the overall school operation working with parents, students, support staff, and highly qualified teachers who virtually facilitate the student instructional program. In addition, through a Professional Learning Community (PLC), the CEO will have access to the experience, expertise, and best practices of his/her colleagues leading schools throughout the nation using the same chosen curricular program. Curriculum development will be contracted through Pennwood's partnerships with Pearson.

The table that follows shows the staffing plan for Year 1 through Year 5.

Position	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
Total Number of Students	1,800	3,000	4,500	6,200	8,200
Elementary (K-5) Teachers	14	23	38	56	78
Secondary (6-12) Teachers	44	73	106	141	182
Special Education Teachers	16	28	45	65	91
English Learner Teachers	1	2	3	3	5
Social Workers	3	5	8	10	14
Counselors	5	8	11	16	21
Advisory Teachers	9	15	21	28	36
CEO	1	1	1	1	1
Principal	1	2	3	3	3
Assistant Principal	3	4	6	9	13
Director of Special Education	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Director of Special Education	1	2	3	5	7
Administrative Assistant	3	6	10	14	19
Director of Counseling	1	1	1	1	1
Dual Enrollment Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Data & Student Assessments	1	1	2	2	2
Assistant Manager of Counseling	1	1	1	1	2
Director of Specialized Programs	1	1	1	1	1
Specialized Programs Assistant Coord.	3	3	3	3	3
Director of Operations	0	0	0	1	1
Manager of Engagement	1	1	1	1	1
Student Engagement Specialists	9	15	23	31	41
School Nurse	1	1	1	1	1
Total Staff	122	196	291	397	526
Total Teacher (EL, SPED, SEC, Advisory) (not counselors)	84	141	213	293	392
Student-to-Teacher Ratio	21:1	21:1	21:1	21:1	21:1

Figure 17. Pennwood's Staffing Plan for the five years of the term

The figures on the following pages show the anticipated organizational charts for Pennwood Cyber Charter School for Year 1 through Year 5 with staffing and positions to support enrolled students. The Board will employ the CEO and all employees on the organizational chart. The Board will maintain proper independent governance of the School and will have appropriate control over the operations of the School. The staffing plan above reflects all staff members who will be employed by the Board/School. The organizational charts below show the staff employed by the Board/School and also list the services provided by Pearson and Drexel University's Goodwin College. The Statement of Agreement with Pearson is provided in Appendix N.

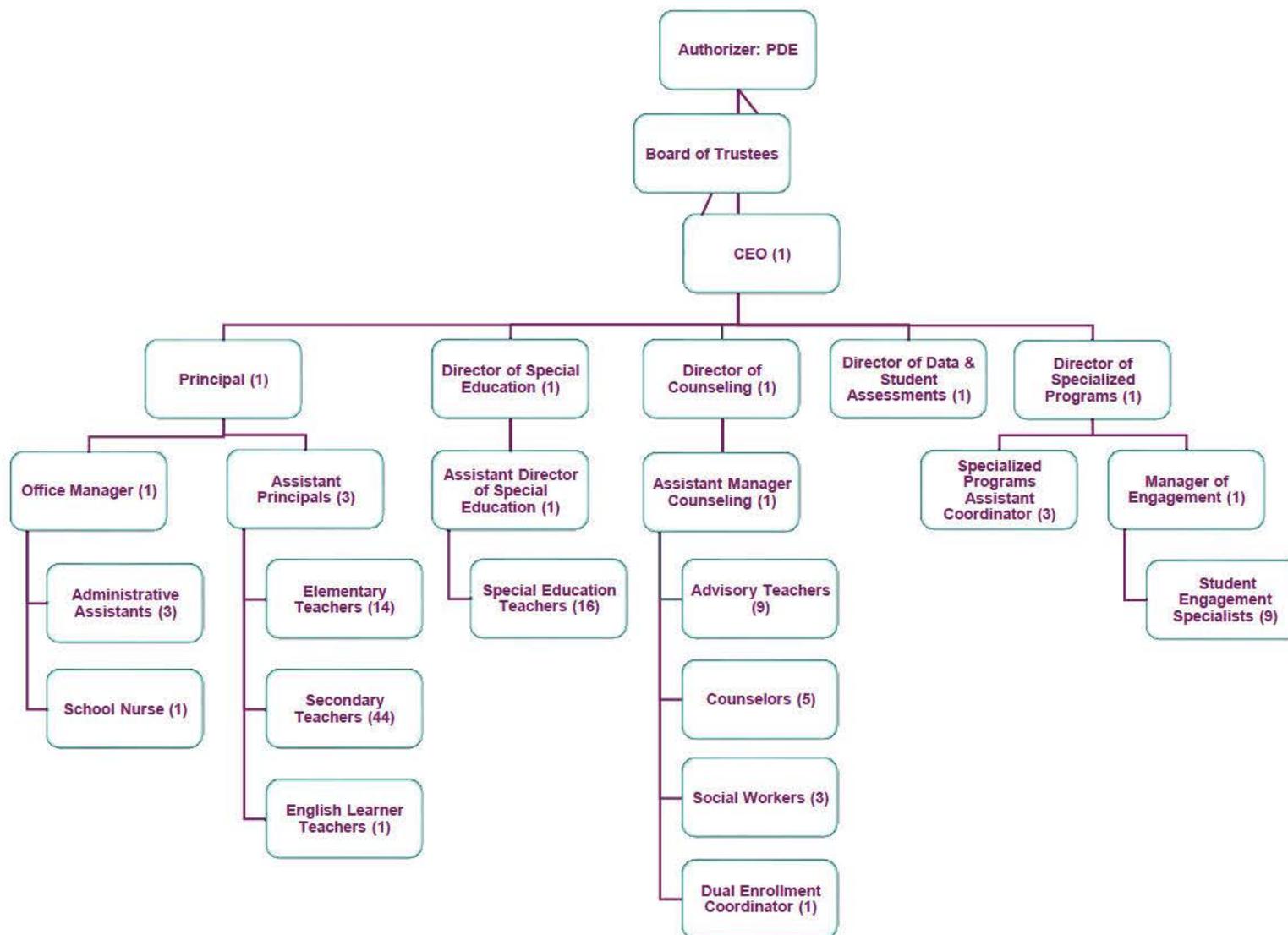Figure 18. Organizational Chart for Year 1 (1,800 Students)

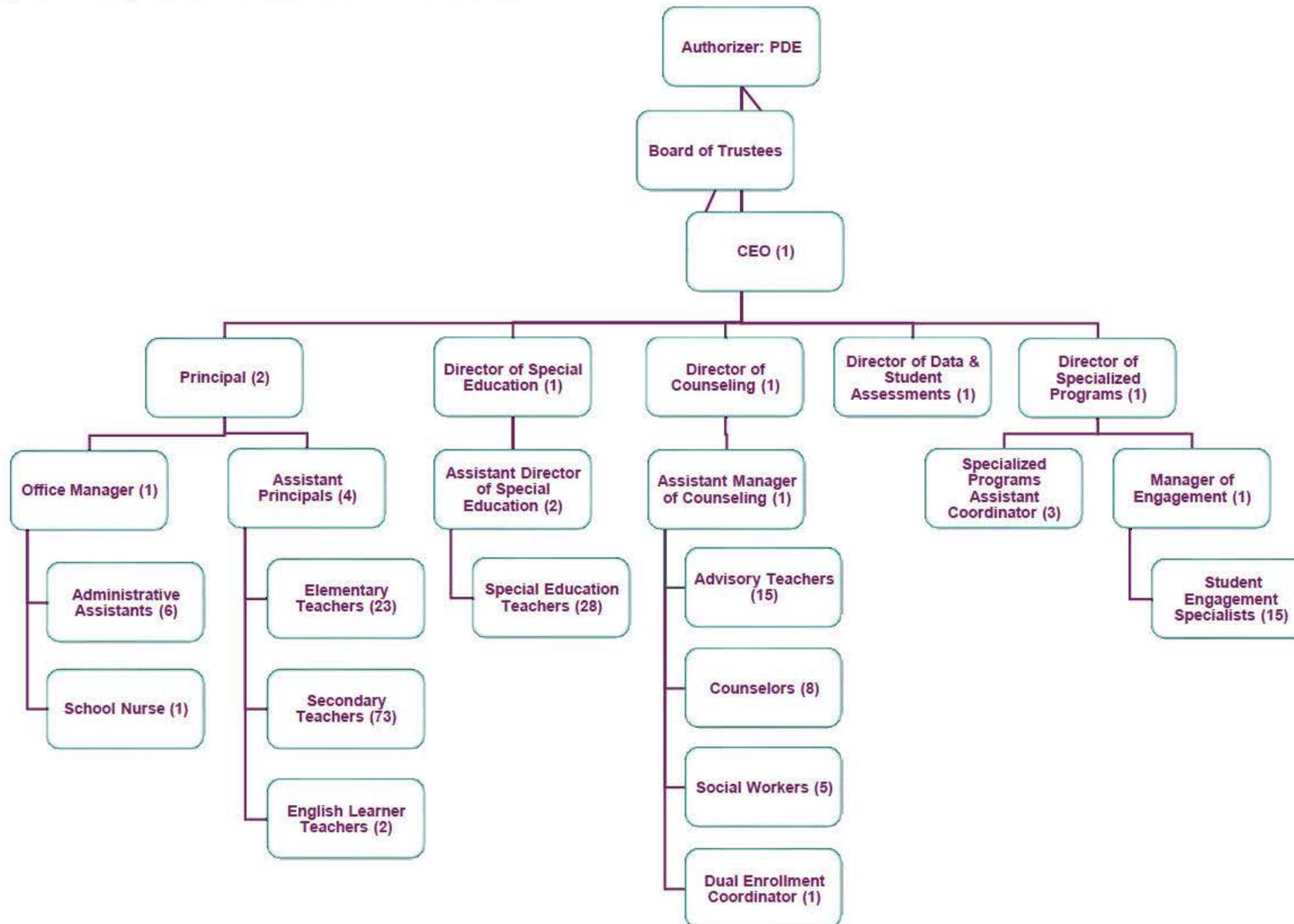Figure 19. Organizational Chart for Year 2 (3,000 Students)

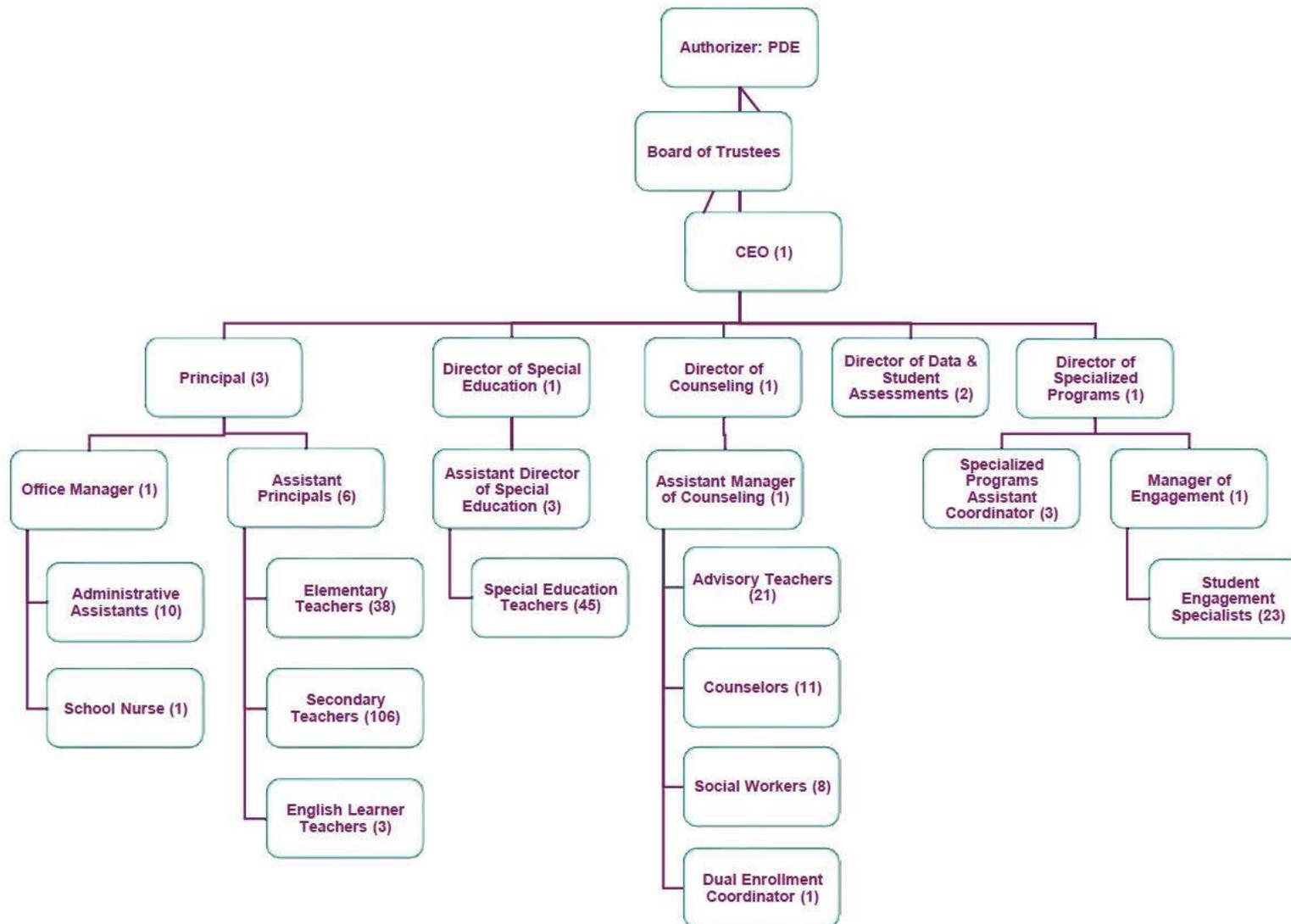Figure 20. Organizational Chart for Year 3 (4,500 Students)

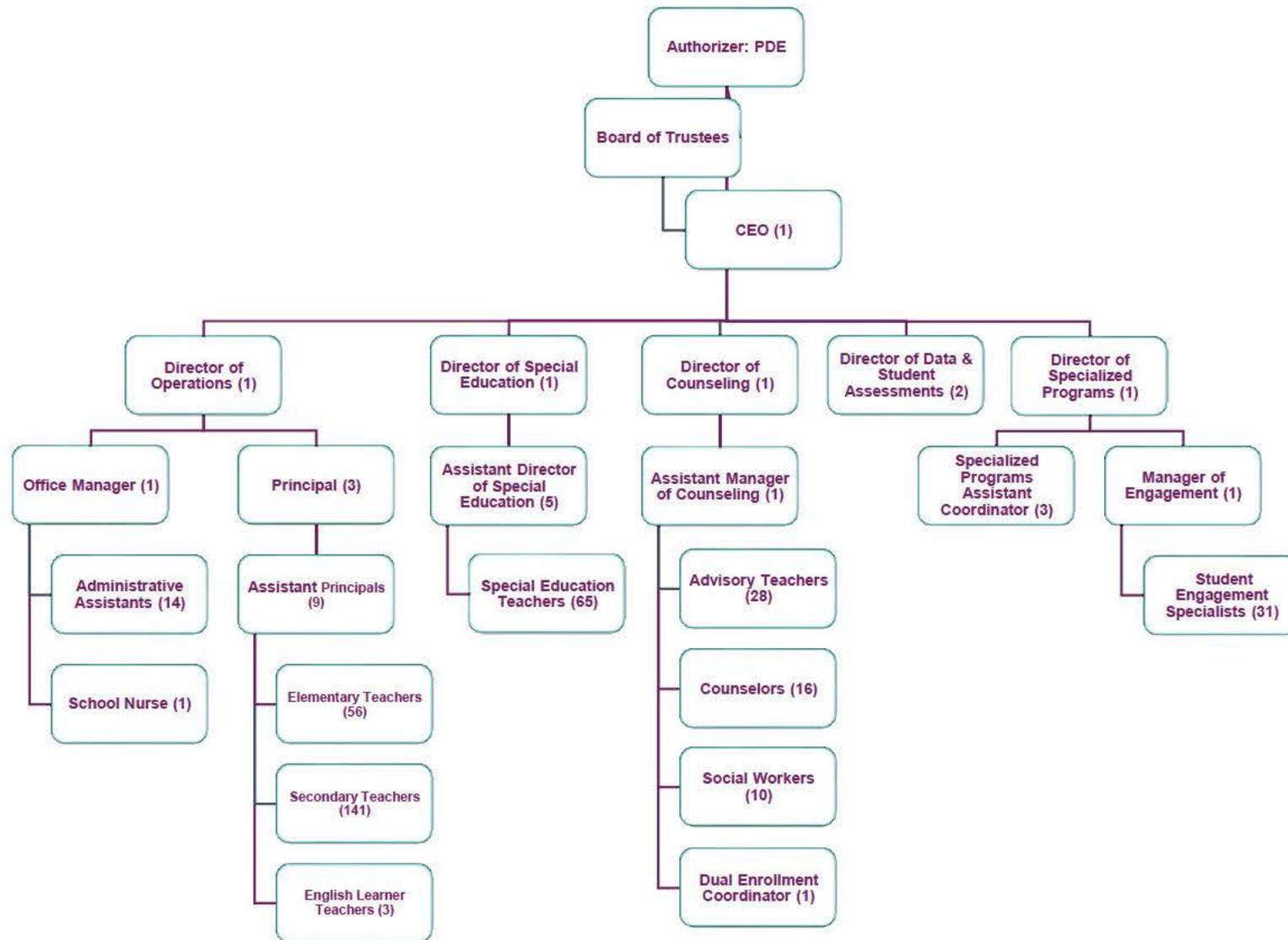Figure 21. Organizational Chart for Year 4 (6,200 Students)

Figure 22. Organizational Chart for Year 5 (8,200 Students)
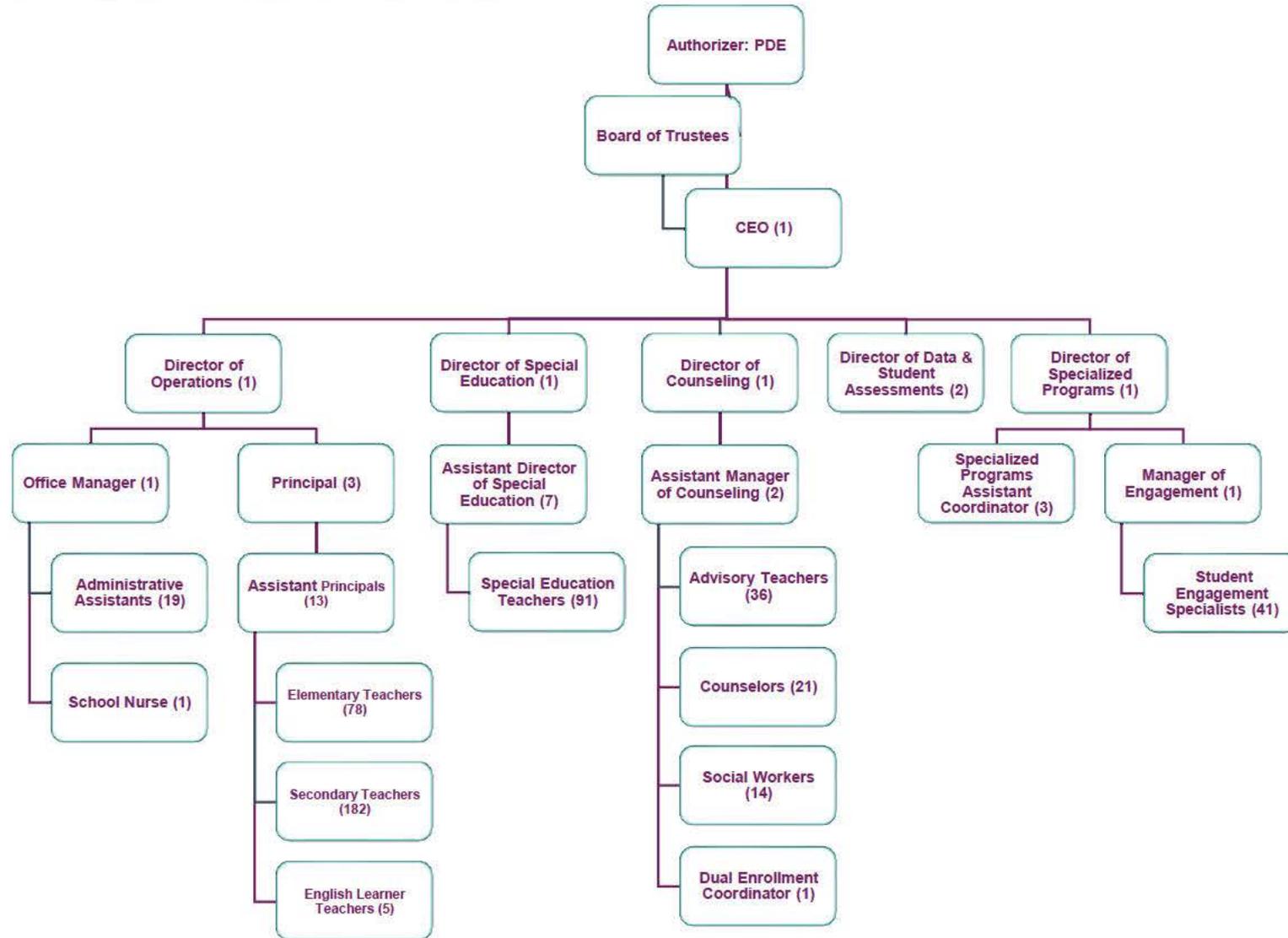
Figure 23. Pennwood will have access to numerous services and functions through its ESP.

ESP Services

Traditional ESP Services and Functions

- Academic Success Partner Services
- Customer Success Partner Services
- Human Resources Services
- Outreach & Enrollment Services
- IT & Technical Support Services
- Finance, Payroll & Accounting
- Special Education Consultation
- College & Career Readiness
- Compliance & Insurance Services
- Facilities Management Services
- Data Analysis Services

University Partnership Services and Functions

- University Faculty Instruction
- Readiness Modules
- Career & College Readiness
- Project-Based Learning
- Certifications
- Badging & Career Readiness

Support from Pearson Staff

Pennwood Cyber Charter School anticipates contracting with Pearson to provide the educational products and services the Board has agreed on and described in the Statement of Agreement (Appendix N). Pennwood's Board of Trustees will maintain ultimate control of the public cyber charter school. The Statement of Agreement also details the respective roles of the Board and Pearson and the services provided. The Board will employ all staff, including the CEO. The CEO and the Board have the authority to hire and terminate employees or contractors and the CEO has the responsibility to provide the day-to-day direction and supervision to all employees of the cyber charter school.

Pearson is our partner, and as such, provides services that the School's administrators and faculty utilize. Pearson reports to and supports the Board, and the Board will exclusively manage the relationship and contract with Pearson.

Key Pearson staff supporting Pennwood Cyber Charter School will include the following members:

School Success Partner – Laura Johnson
As the School Success Partner, Laura joined Pearson in October 2018 and currently serves as a School Success Partner. She is proud to be a member of the Customer Success Partners Program. During her first six years with Pearson Virtual Schools, Laura oversaw Enrollment and Family Support and was responsible for enrollment, academic placement, supply chain, tech support, and school and program operations support. She then became a School Success Partner, working with cross-functional teams to provide service delivery solutions to ensure customer satisfaction and retention and advocating for public policies that support virtual learning and defend against restrictive policies in her assigned states.

Prior to joining Pearson, Laura served in several senior leadership roles at ICON Clinical Research, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical contract research organizations, in operations, business development, and strategic account/alliance management roles for ten years. Prior experience includes key operational and marketing roles in the voice/data communications and surgical product industries. Laura has an MBA from Loyola College, Baltimore, and a BS from Virginia Tech.

Academic Success Partner – Melissa Brown
Melissa Brown has been an educator for more than 30 years and currently works as Academic Success Partner for Pearson. In this role, she works to support school leaders in academic and instructional practice at Pearson-supported schools. Prior to working at Pearson, Melissa served for nine years as founding Executive Director of Indiana Connections Academy, a statewide virtual charter school. In January 2019, Melissa was named School Leader of the Year by Pearson, and she was selected to participate in the Executive Leadership Program for LGBTQ Leaders at Stanford Graduate School of Business in 2019. In 2021, Melissa was named a "Champion of Equity" by the American Consortium for Equity in Education. Melissa has been an outspoken advocate for LGBTQ+ students and teachers and has presented at a number of conferences/workshops. Melissa has a master's degree in Information and Learning Technologies from University of Colorado Denver.

Solutions Partner – Hilary Bessette

Hilary Bessette has worked in the virtual education space for the last nine years and currently works as a Solutions Partner for Pearson. In this role, she acts as a liaison between our supported schools and Pearson teams. She supports school leaders in their operations and logistics and helps to problem solve when needed. Hilary attended Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania where she received her Bachelor's in Sociology/Anthropology and Criminal Justice. She attended Wilmington University in Delaware where she received her Master's in Education for School Counseling.

Service Delivery Partner – Brooke Crump

Brooke Crump has 20 years education experience and current services as a service delivery partner at Pearson, where she manages a team of cross-functional experts who provide coordinated services to Pearson-supported schools. Prior to joining Pearson, Brooke was a high school technology teacher at Keystone National High School and previously a Business Education high school teacher at Pocono Mountain School District and a Special Education Teacher at Shawnee Academy. Brooke has her Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Catawba College and a Master of Education in Secondary Education and Teaching from Gwynedd Mercy University. She also holds a certificate in Executive Leadership from Cornell University and teacher certification from Pennsylvania in Business Education & Technology – K-12.

Board Support – Megann Arthur

Megann Arthur is a relationship manager and governance advisor with over 19 years of experience as the primary intermediate support for the Boards of Directors in schools supported by Pearson throughout the country. Currently, she is an Education Partnerships and State Policy Specialist for Pearson. For the past 15 years, Megann has worked closely with numerous charter schools in her previous positions as Director of Board Relations and Board Relations Manager. She has worked with both for-profit and not-for-profit entities in her professional career. She has a Bachelor of Arts in English from the Pennsylvania State University. Megann is a Pennsylvania resident and has lived in the state for 31 years; as such, she is able to provide the Board with specific local and state knowledge.

Policy and Advocacy Support – Jennifer Clarke

Jennifer Clarke is an Education Partnership and State Policy Specialist for Pearson. For the past 15 years, Jennifer has worked on education policy and charter school initiatives in Pennsylvania. As a resident of Pennsylvania, she supports advocacy and state-specific education initiatives. Jennifer has a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Elizabethtown College and a Master of Education from George Washington University.

Affirmative Vote

In Appendix K, we have included the minutes from the meeting during which the Board approved by affirmative vote the Statement of Agreement with Pearson. The Board of Trustees will record each affirmative vote of a majority of the members showing how each member voted in order to take action on the following subjects (as noted in the By-Laws attached as Appendix L):

- Approving the school calendar;
- Adopting textbooks;
- Appointing or dismissing charter school administrators;
- Adopting the annual budget;
- Deciding matters related to the operation of the school, including, but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum, operating procedures, and determining general, academic, financial, personnel, and other policies subject to the school's cyber charter school charter and applicable law;
- Employing, discharging, and contracting with necessary professional and nonprofessional employees subject to the school's cyber charter school charter and the provisions of applicable law;
- Approving the hire or termination of contractors and determine the terms and policies under which contractors shall provide services;

- Approving the adoption of courses of study;
- Approving the appointment or dismissal of school staff;
- Approving the creation or increase of indebtedness and designate depositories of school funds;
- Approving contracts;
- Determining the salary, compensation, and all terms and conditions of employment of school administrators, teachers and other staff; and
- Approving the entry into contracts with intermediate units, school districts or area vocational/technical school for the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

The Board has contracted with Pearson for the benefit of a smooth school start up, quality academic materials for students, and national best practices expertise and guidance. Pearson has a proven record of success collaborating with public cyber schools and consistently strong ratings from parents.
The Board has also contracted with Pearson for special education instructional support due to its experience and positive track record in assisting schools with developing and implementing systems and protocols that support students with disabilities, accelerated students, and English Learners.

Sunshine Act

The Board intends to meet at least eight times per year but will meet more often if needed to conduct school business in a timely fashion. The regular Board meetings will typically be held at the school site and according to the schedule that will be set by the Board at their Annual Meeting and in a manner consistent with the Sunshine Act. All public board meetings will be advertised as mandated by law in publications of general circulation at the beginning of each school year and posted on the school's website. Board members will be allowed to attend telephonically, according to the limitations of Pennwood's bylaws, the Sunshine Act, and Nonprofit Corporation Law. The agenda for all meetings will be posted on the school's website at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the meeting in accordance with the Sunshine Act and will also be posted at the school's meeting location to ensure reasonable notice to the public and the School's constituency. The public may directly address the Board at meetings, and members of the public, including parents, will also be able to attend Board meetings via teleconference upon advance request in a manner set by the Board. All Board members will be provided training on compliance with the Sunshine Act.

B. How will the Board of Trustees be selected?

Selection Methods for the Board of Trustees

Trustees will be elected at a duly organized meeting of the Pennwood Board by a majority of the Trustees then in office. Members will take office immediately at the roles to which they are elected after being sworn in in accordance with Section 321 of the Public School Code. Vacancies on the Board will be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Board, or by a sole remaining Trustee, and each person so elected will serve for the balance of the unexpired term. Trustees will be divided into three classes, each class consisting of, as nearly as possible, an equal number of members. The members of the first class will hold office for an initial term of one year; the members of the second class for an initial term of two years; and the members of the third class for an initial term of three years. At the close of each annual meeting, the successors to the class of members whose terms expire that year will commence to hold office for a term of three years or until their successors have been identified. In the event of an increase in the number of Board members, the remaining members will assign the newly

created position to the appropriate class or classes so that the three classes continue to consist of, as nearly as possible, an equal number of members.

Once the new Board is seated, the Board members will choose officers as per the bylaws. The officers of the Board will be a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and a Secretary.

After the initial Board is selected, the Board will also develop a Nominating Committee that will bear the responsibility of recruiting and interviewing prospective Trustees.

C. What steps will be taken to maintain continuity between the founding coalition's vision and the Board of Trustees?

Steps for Maintaining Continuity between Founders' Vision and the Board of Trustees

The Founding Board and Founding Coalition are related but separate entities for the purposes of this application and school start up.

Founding Board: Upon approval of the charter, the Founding Board consisting of five members will become the governing Board of Trustees with the responsibilities of governing the School. The Board will then aspire to grow to at least seven board members, including at least one Pennwood parent.

Founding Coalition: In addition to the support of the Founding Board, the Founding Coalition includes organizations, institutions, and individuals who supported the development of the charter application and believe in its mission and vision. These individuals include parents, teachers, students, and community members along with policymakers and organizations across the state. The Founding Board is committed to following the vision and educational model consistently stated through interactions with these individuals and organizations. Such interactions included information sessions and organic conversations that arose as statements of support and letters of support were gathered. As mentioned above, the current Founding Board intends to transition to the Board of Trustees upon approval of the cyber charter application. Trustees will serve staggered terms ensuring the Board will not have all members terms end simultaneously.

Sustaining the continuity of the vision of the Founding Board requires careful scrutiny of prospective Trustees' commitment to the school's mission as well as continually educating Trustees as to the scope of their legal responsibilities such as duty of loyalty, obedience, and faithfulness to the School's mission. To that end, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will hold annual Board retreats centered on effective Board development.

In addition, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will actively seek to recruit educators, stakeholders, and professionals to become members of the Board in addition to the parent board member.

Board Training

Board members plan to attend all required governance trainings to ensure that we have ongoing knowledge about governance, oversight requirements, department rules, policies, and procedures. In addition, the Board will allocate funds to ensure each Board member's compliance with Act 55 of 2017 and Act 18 of 2019.

Additional training may also be acquired to ensure smooth operations and effective board practices conducted by a reputable third-party vendor. Other trainings may include Effective Board Governance of Public Charter Schools online training module series as well as specific training provided in person, via the Internet, and in print. Training topics may include charter school basics, responsibilities, conflict of interest, effective meeting management, quality Board leadership and policy development. In addition, Board members will have the opportunity to participate in various regional and national conferences to network with other charter board members and further their development as effective board members.

D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board.

Board Member Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Board include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Protect the legal interests of the charter school and adhere to all applicable laws;
- Develop and prepare the school budget;
- Practice financial management strategies;
- Act as fiduciary of the school;
- Provide academic program approval;
- Establish a framework for the budget process;
- Authorize major expenditures, substantial program changes, etc.;
- Elect the officers of the corporation and determine their terms;
- Ensure that the charter is achieving its vision and mission;
- Set Board policy;
- Evaluate and monitor the activities and success of the CEO and other members of the school leadership team;
- Govern the operations of the school but leave daily operations to the CEO;
- Exercise sound legal and ethical practices and policies;
- Manage liabilities wisely;
- Advocate good external relations with the community, school districts, media, neighbors, parents, and students;
- Hire and evaluate the CEO annually;
- Hire contractors, negotiate service agreements, and hold contactors accountable for performance under such agreements;
- Review and renew the contract with the cyber educational services provider;
- Comply with state and federal reporting requirements;
- Practice strategic planning;
- Ensure adequate resources and manage them effectively;
- Assess the organization's performance including monitoring achievement of accountability framework;

- Attend mandatory training annually that is relevant to effective leadership of the charter school;

- Act as tribunal for disciplinary hearings;

- Approve real estate transactions; and

- Negotiate and enter into a charter with PDE.

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

Steps for Facilitating a Productive Relationship between Administrators and Teachers

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will take the following steps to facilitate a productive relationship between administrators and teachers:

- Training. Extensive onboarding and training is provided to teachers during the back-to-school period as well as during designated professional learning days, with the skills and strategies to:
  - Use the tools in our online platform to support and monitor student learning
  - Use data to manage student engagement and inform instruction
  - Identify students who may be at-risk, or in need of targeted intervention
  - Facilitate- learning in a virtual environment
  - Conduct required school year cycle teacher tasks
  - Implement school processes and policies
  - Foster socialization and connectedness in a virtual school community
  - Foster soft skills and leadership capabilities development

  This training will help to build a robust and positive school culture focused on student academic achievement. The culture will be one of collaboration of all school stakeholders in the common goal of meeting the mission and vision of the school.

- Weekly meetings between teachers and managers. During these meetings, teachers and administrators will discuss student academic outcomes. They will review benchmark data, student grades in the teacher's course, engagement metrics (such as parent and student phone calls), and plans for weekly Livelessons. These meetings will also include periodic reviews of staff goals, performance, and professional development plans.

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Teachers will meet will colleagues in weekly PLC meetings. The teachers will decide on a common SMART goal related to student achievement. Teachers will work together and share best practices in how to move students forward in learning and achieve their shared SMART goal. These SMART goals should be related to the school's charter goals.

- Open communication of school goals and the School Improvement Plan. School Improvement will be a constant cycle. Once data is gathered (whether from state testing or benchmarks), the school's leadership team and staff will develop action plans to meet any needs discovered from a review of the data. School improvement plans are living documents. Progress on the plans will be shared with the staff and other interested stakeholders at least once a quarter. Each action plan will have a shepherd who will be responsible for leading the plan, motivating the staff to reach its goals, and to keep the focus on the plan. The shepherd will report on the progress of the goal to the entire staff.

- Evaluations are completed at least two times per year for each staff member. Since teachers and managers meet frequently to discuss performance and student academic outcomes, there should be no surprises during the evaluation sessions. Instead, these sessions are extensions of

the weekly conversations between manager and teacher. Teachers will be given time to talk about the lessons they are most proud of, the successes of their students, and their goals for the future.

- Through the school's career ladder system, teachers have the opportunity to expand into leadership roles and responsibilities, often working with administration on key initiatives.

- Twice a year, the school conducts formal staff surveys (Pulse and Staff Engagement surveys) to get direct feedback on the school and staff morale. This enables administration to find specific ways to improve, broaden and deepen relationships with staff.

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

Parental and Student Involvement in Decision-Making Matters

Parents and students will provide leadership and input in school decision-making where appropriate. The Board will meet approximately eight times per year in open, public session to ensure transparency in operation.

Parents actively participate in the School and with the Board. The Board may create ad hoc parent/Learning Coach advisory groups to provide guidance on particular subjects such as community partnerships and neighborhood outreach. Parents will also be encouraged to be involved with the Board's activities. The schedule and agenda for all Board meetings will be posted to the school website. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will make all Board minutes available to families on request and will report on Board activities in the newsletter. The Board will aim to have at least one member of the Board be the parent of an enrolled student. The Board will also have a public comment policy to support parent interaction (see Appendix S – Board Policies – Public Comment).

As stated previously, parents may participate in Pennwood Cyber Charter School in many ways, including:

- Parent representation on the Board;
- Board Committees;
- StarTrack ratings;
- Community Coordinators; and
- Club Connections.

Students provide feedback on courses and teachers. Input will be gathered on an ongoing basis via StarTrack. A StarTrack box requesting text feedback and ratings on a five-star scale is embedded in virtually every lesson in the curriculum and on the home page for each Learning Coach. Data gathered from this feedback is examined carefully and acted upon by school staff. For the 2020-2021 school year, 1,282,065 lesson ratings were submitted by currently enrolled students and parents attending schools using the same chosen curricular program, with an average rating of 4.3 out of five stars.

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

The bylaws must contain a provision for "failure to organize or neglect of duty." Specifically, the bylaws must outline a removal procedure for the failure of a board member to perform his or her duties as outlined in the Charter School Law.
No board member shall, as a private citizen, engage in any business transaction with the charter school of which he or she is a trustee, be employed in any capacity by the charter school of which he

or she is a trustee, or receive from such charter school any pay for services rendered to the charter school.
A charter school Board of Trustees shall have a designated treasurer who shall receive all funds including local, state and federal funds and privately donated funds. The treasurer shall also make payments out of the same on proper orders approved by the Board of Trustees, signed by the president or vice president of the Board. The treasurer may pay out such funds on orders that have been properly signed without the approval of the Board first having been secured for the payment of amounts owing under any contracts, which shall previously have been approved by the Board, and by which prompt payment the charter will receive a discount or other advantage.
Procedures for dismissal of an employee must be contained in the bylaws.

Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and Contracts

The school's Articles of Incorporation are included in Appendix M.

The by-laws for the Board of Trustees that outline the number of members, length of terms, offices, committees, grounds for removal, and relationship with school administration are provided in Appendix L.

The by-laws contain a provision for "failure to organize or neglect of duty." The bylaws outline a removal procedure for the failure of a board member to perform his or her duties as outlined in the Charter School Law. No board member will, as a private citizen, engage in any business transaction with Pennwood Cyber Charter School or Pearson, be employed in any capacity by Pennwood Cyber Charter School or Pearson, or receive from Pennwood Cyber Charter School or Pearson any pay for services rendered to Pennwood Cyber Charter School or Pearson. The Board of Trustees will adopt a conflicts of interest policy as well as a Code of Ethics (included in Appendix S) for compliance with the Ethics Act as well as its obligations as a non-profit corporation under state and federal law.

The Board has a designated Treasurer, David Hardy, who will receive all funds including local, state, and federal funds and privately donated funds. The Treasurer or designee will also make payments out of the same on proper orders approved by the Board, signed by the President of the Board. The Treasurer may pay out funds on orders that have been properly signed without the approval of the Board first having been secured for the payment of amounts owing under any contracts, which will previously have been approved by the Board, and by which prompt payment Pennwood Cyber Charter School will receive a discount or other advantage.

The by-laws also contain procedures for dismissal of an employee. The Board is mindful as well of its obligations as a Board of a non-profit corporation.

A letter of intent to lease an administrative office in Central York is included in Appendix R.

The Statement of Agreement with Pearson is included in Appendix N.

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

Board Member Contact Information

Name: Joyce A. Good, Ed.D.

Address: 6258 Byerly Road, Narvon PA 17555

Phone Number: 717-468-7110

Resume: Included in Appendix I

Name: Stephanie Haas Thoeny

Address: 616 Kirsch Avenue, Wayne, PA 19087

Phone Number: 215-622-3075

Resume: Included in Appendix I

Name: David Hardy

Address: 217 N 23rd Street, Philadelphia PA 19103

Phone Number: 215-469-1030

Resume: Included in Appendix I

Name: C. Tyler Havey

Address: 1717 Arch St Ste 610, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Phone Number: 215-757-4005

Resume: Included in Appendix I

Name: Marc LeBlond

Address: 258 Brentwood Drive, Cogan Station, PA 17728

Phone Number: 272-236-9694

Resume: Included in Appendix I

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

Management Contract

The Statement of Agreement between the Board and Pearson is included in Appendix N. A letter from the Board regarding provider selection is included in Appendix O. The Statement of Agreement represents the contemplated agreement between the Board and Pearson. The Board has signed the Statement of Agreement which will take effect immediately upon the issuance of a charter from PDE. Additionally, the Board agreed to the Statement of Agreement per resolution in the Board meeting on September 15, 2022. The Board and Pearson have agreed to further negotiate language if necessary, based on feedback received from PDE.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School has contracted with Pearson Virtual Schools to provide the cyber educational program outlined in this charter application. The Board of Trustees believes that the quality and experience that Pearson Virtual Schools provides will complement and enhance the services to students throughout Pennsylvania. However, Pennwood's Board of Trustees will maintain ultimate control of the cyber charter school. The Statement of Agreement details the respective roles of the Board and Pearson and the services provided. The Board will employ all staff, including the CEO. The

CEO and the Board have the authority to hire and terminate employees or contractors and the CEO has the responsibility to provide the day-to-day direction and supervision.

The Board will maintain responsibility for ensuring that Pennwood Cyber Charter School meets all educational, fiscal, and programmatic goals outlined in the charter. The Board will regularly review the services and will set expectations for reporting from Pearson to the Board. Under the Statement of Agreement, Pearson will be subject to a performance review, conducted at the Board's discretion. The Board will have the right to terminate its contract with Pearson if performance obligations are not met and Pearson is unable to cure such deficiency after being given reasonable notice, as more fully described in the Statement of Agreement.

IV. FINANCE AND FACILITY

IV.1 Financing

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

Preliminary Start-up and Operating Budget

The preliminary startup and operating budget using the PDE template is provided in Appendix P. It is carefully aligned to the mission of Pennwood and demonstrates a school with sound financial planning. The five-year budget represents best estimates for revenues and costs for Pennwood Cyber Charter School. A detailed narrative regarding the budget is also provided in Appendix P, along with the Pearson Fee Schedule.

Start-up expenses, such as facility and administrative staff, have been budgeted and will be funded through a startup grant from Pearson. This grant is not expected to be repaid. A letter from Pearson is provided in Appendix Q.

B. Develop a purchasing procedure that addresses a competitive way to purchase goods and services. Note: For additional financing procedures see Section 1725-A of the Charter School Law.

Purchasing Procedure

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow all financing procedures in Section 1725-A of the Charter School Law. Pennwood will follow the requirements of the Charter School Law, specifically §17-1715-A(10) charter school requirements for all construction projects and construction-related work.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will adhere to or fall within the parameters set forth in the attached Board-approved purchasing policies in Appendix S:

   A. Purchases Budgeted Policy
   B. Purchases Subject to Bid Policy
   C. Disqualification, Disbar and Suspension of Bids Policy

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

Fundraising Efforts

The Board does not anticipate relying upon fundraising efforts to generate capital or to supplement the per pupil allocations (PPA). Any required start-up funding will be provided by Pearson and will not be required to reimburse Pearson providing the School with a sound fiscal position from the first day of opening. The Board will focus the School's greatest level of attention on instructional activities and will evaluate any need to pursue fundraising opportunities in the future.

D. Describe the implementation of the following required financial procedures: The treasurer of the charter shall deposit the funds belonging to the charter school in a depository approved by the board and shall at the end of each month make a report to the charter Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him or her during the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the charter treasurer shall be made in the name of the charter school. The Board of Trustees of a charter school shall invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice. Authorized types of investments for charter schools shall be:

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

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

Financial Oversight

The Pennwood Board is responsible for the oversight and approval of school financial policies and procedures and possesses the necessary experience and financial expertise to fulfill its financial oversight duties. The Board will contract with an alternate CPA firm (different from the Independent Auditor) to engage in semi-annual agreed upon procedures for the firm to review the financial records of Pennwood Cyber Charter School. These two reviews per school year provide additional assurances to the Board of the School's financial position, solvency, strategy, policies and procedures. The firm should issue a report to the Board containing their conclusions. The Board will ensure that Pennwood will establish systems and controls that will result in the timely completion of financial reporting as required by law, regulation, or the charter, including a report of budgeted and actual expenses. The Board will provide any information required by the PDE.

Once the charter is approved and the Board finalizes the Statement of Agreement (Appendix P), the Board will also be responsible for managing the contractual relationship with Pearson.

Depositing Funds

The Treasurer of the Board will deposit funds belonging to the School in a depository account approved by the Board. Reconciliation of this account will be performed monthly, and transactions will be reviewed to ensure funds have been deposited in a manner consistent with the policies of the School. Pennwood will maintain its accounts at a federally insured banking institution within the state in compliance with applicable state laws.

Investing Funds

Based upon the cash balances of the school, the Board may invest school funds in a savings account at a federally insured banking institution. The Board will ensure that any investment of school funds will be maintained in an authorized account.

The Board will invest charter school funds subject to the standards set forth in 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code. Example investments include:

- United States Treasury bills.

- Short-term obligations of the United States Government or its agencies or instrumentalities.

- Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits or share account of institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the extent that such accounts are so insured, and for any amounts above the insured maximum, provided that approved collateral as provided by law therefore shall be pledged by the depository.

- Obligations of the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith of the Commonwealth, or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the political subdivision.

- Shares of an investment company registered under the Investment Company of America Act of 1940 (54 Stat.789, 15 U.S.C. * 80a-1 et seq.) as defined in PA 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.

Financial Processes

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow a financial and accounting plan that is compliant with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and will provide an accurate accounting of all of its finances, ensure sufficient information for audit purposes, and provide data in the format needed for accurate and timely reporting.

The Board will use a sound budgeting and forecasting policy and procedures to monitor revenue and authorize expenditures according to any restrictions placed on such revenue. Developing the annual budget will be an iterative process incorporating input from key stakeholders, including the CEO, Business Manager, and designated members of the Board. A preliminary budget based on initial assumptions will be presented to the Board and will be approved by the Board before the start of the school year. This budget will then be compared to the actual and forecasted results on a monthly basis.

The Office Manager, employed by the Board, will perform the following duties:

- Monitor and track all school-based assets
- Oversee enrollment requirements
- Perform maintenance of student records
- Coordinate district billing

Pennwood will develop and maintain simple check request and purchase order forms to document the authorization of non-payroll expenditures. All proposed expenditures will be approved by a designee of the Board. The designee will review the proposed expenditure for approval and to determine whether it is consistent with the Board's adopted budget. Supporting documentation will be required for all expenditures.

Pennwood will use industry-standard accounting software to ensure proper bookkeeping. The school will maintain detailed accounting records consistent with the accounting and financial reporting manuals prescribed by PDE.

Financial Reporting

Each month, Pennwood will produce a set of detailed financial statements that include a statement of activities, a balance sheet, bank reconciliations, invoice detail, payroll registers, any grant fund expenditures, cash receipts from all sources, and a transaction listing of all activity. The Treasurer of the Board will be provided with access to such financial documents for review as an increased measure of oversight and governance. During the Board's regularly scheduled meetings, a financial report will be presented that will include the current results of the School's financial activities along with a comparison of projected annual costs and the annual approved budget. Budget variances and matters of financial significance will be discussed with the Board and necessary actions and Board approvals will be taken.

Annual Financial Report

The Treasurer will settle the accounts annually with the Board for each school year. Pursuant to 24 P.S. §4-437, Pennwood's accounts will be audited annually. Once Pennwood Cyber Charter School's charter is approved and prior to the end of the first fiscal year, the Board will enter into a contract with an independent Certified Public Accounting firm chosen by the Board to conduct an audit of its annual financial statements. The annual financial report (PDE-2057) will be completed and filed with the PDE by October 31, beginning with October 31 after the first year of operations. The audit will be conducted in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards and will meet the specific compliance requirements set forth by Pennsylvania.

IV.2 Facility

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

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

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will lease permanent space for administrative staff located at 555 Ryan Road, York, PA to serve as the main site where administrative staff will work. Student records will be maintained at this location. The site will be available for PDE staff to visit when the School is in operation.

The initial physical facility will need to be flexible for growth and future needs. The site will include at least one conference room with doors for use in IEP conferences and other special education related activities. To the extent that the site will be used for student support, the site will be used only for testing, tutoring, and supplemental services related to special education.

As the school grows, the Board may explore additional satellite facilities throughout the state. Pennwood Cyber Charter School understands that facilities will be for auxiliary services and not to act as brick-and-mortar school. Students will be at physical locations only for the time needed to participate in these services and activities. As suggested in the Basic Education Circular issued in 2013, Pennwood will utilize any satellite sites for standardized and/or other testing, tutoring, and/or supplemental services such as special education services.

At least 60 days prior to opening any additional facilities, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will provide the PDE the following:

- The name and description of each individual activity and service to be provided at the facility.
- The identification of necessary background and clearance records for the individuals providing services at the facility.
- An explanation of whether the facility is necessary for providing the service and, if so, why.
- A description of alternatives in place for providing the services at locations or in methods other than at the facility to ensure equitable access to the services by students who are not able to travel to the facility.
- Copies of policies concerning student presence at a physical facility, including:
  - Policies for when student presence at the facility might be required, such as for standardized testing or for student and/or parent meetings with school staff.
  - Policies on how presence at the facility is monitored.
- Any additional information requested by PDE.

Through an area survey of Central York, potential types of site locations were evaluated during the summer of 2022. In Appendix R, we include a letter of intent between the Board and the property owner to lease a property located at 555 Ryan Run Road, York, PA 17404. Ryan Run Properties LP is the landlord of the property, located in York, PA. The Pennwood Board President and a principal of Ryan Run Properties LP have signed the Letter of Intent to Lease included in Appendix R. Once the charter is finalized, Pennwood will follow a specific, fast-paced process for securing this lease, or locating comparable space and also conducting start-up procedures.

This process includes:
- Initial requirements reviews
- Site inventory (space) surveys
- Down-selection of spaces for physical review
- Physical on-site space reviews
- Down-selection of spaces for competitive proposal process
- Proposal and Best-and-Final submissions
- Selection of spaces
- Lease negotiations and execution
- Build-out project plan
- Installment of Tenant improvements
- Occupancy

The facility selected by the school will be approximately 4,500 rentable square feet depending upon community, site availability, and needs of the school. The facility will be located in standard office space. The School will enter into a five-year lease with extension options at the school's election. Key factors considered in the selection process include:
- ADA compliance
- Suite layout
- Stability of landlord
- Ability of landlord to support a turn-key solution
- Cost on an annual and a full-term basis
- Security for both the facility and the surrounding area
- Safety for teachers and staff
- Ease of access (location) for teachers and staff

- Special termination provisions in the event of charter suspension or revocation
- Technology availability, including bandwidth for school operations
- Lighting (natural and otherwise)

The School will tailor the build-out of the facility to meet the specific needs of the school. During the search for a facility, the Board will identify locations which already have an existing build out close to what the School's facility needs will be to minimize build out costs.

The following figure is a sample layout/floor plan for a 4,500 square foot facility, which will include:
- Reception area
- 4 workstations and 5 offices, 1-2 offices are flex office/meeting rooms
- 1 Conference Room
- IT/MIS Room
- Storage
- Kitchenette/Break area
- In-suite restrooms
- Teacher collaboration space

Figure 24. Facility Floor Plan
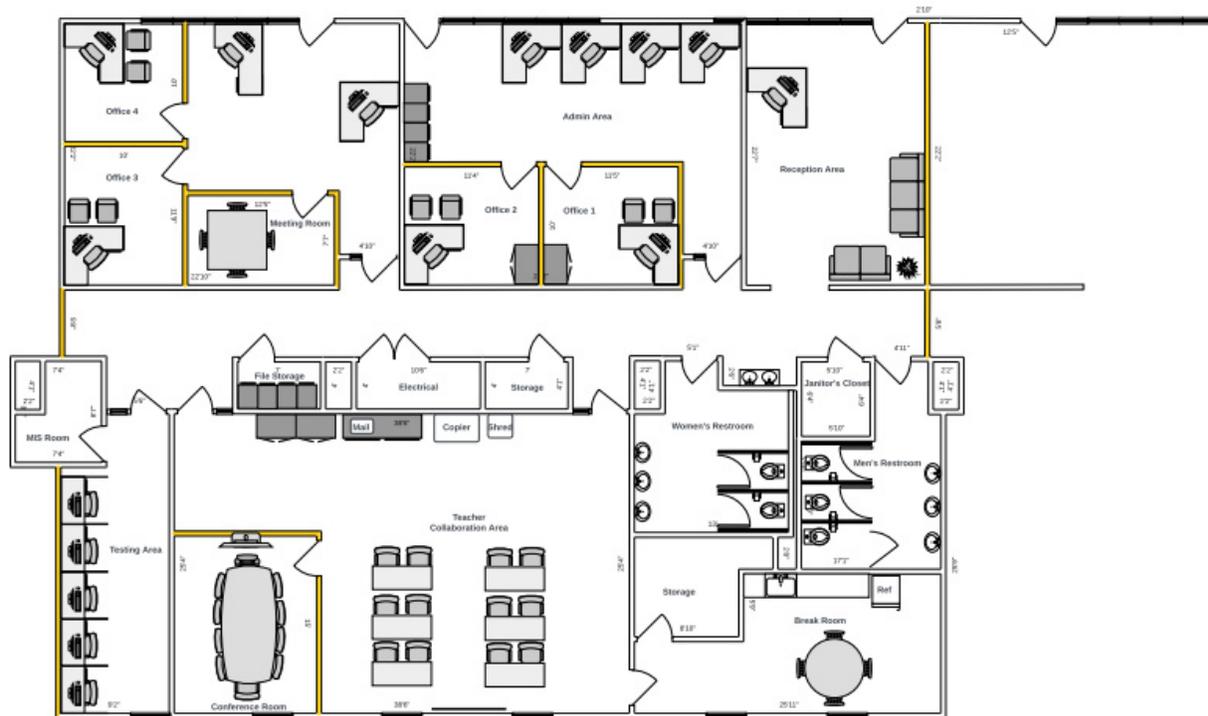
Ownership of the Facilities

In Appendix R, we include a letter of intent between the Board and the property owner to lease premises located at 555 Ryan Run Road, York, Pennsylvania. Ryan Run Properties LP is the landlord of the property. Ryan Run Properties LP a professional landlord, its Pennsylvania Domestic Limited Partnership filed on July 14, 2005. We have included a Letter of Intent to Lease with Ryan Run Properties LP in Appendix R. The formal lease has not yet been signed since the charter has not yet been approved. The Board will do so once the charter is approved. Once the charter is finalized, Pennwood Cyber

Charter School will follow a specific, fast-paced process for securing this lease, or locating comparable space and also conducting start-up procedures.

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

Suitability of Site

The site for the School's administrative office is identified in the Letter of Intent to Lease. This building will include administrative offices and infrastructure for school operations. The site will be in compliance with the necessary building and zoning codes as well as accessible to individuals — including staff, parents and students — with disabilities.

The site can host parent teacher conferences as needed. As previously stated, students will participate in state proficiency tests depending upon grade level. The School will set up in-person, proctored locations for state testing throughout the state based on the geographic location of the student population. Pennwood wants to make clear that any school sites will be for auxiliary services and not primary locations as brick-and-mortar schools. The Board is aware and will follow the Basic Education Circular (BEC), "Cyber Charter School Operations and Proper Use of Physical Facilities" issued July 2013 .[59] As is required by the BEC, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will function and provide all curriculum and instruction to all of its students without the need for students to attend any physical facility. Pennwood will only use its physical facility as an administrative office and at times, a resource center providing no more than supplemental services to students. Pennwood will provide equitable access to services for all enrolled students.

Pennwood has analyzed several locations, based upon criteria needed to run an effective public cyber school. Cyber education requires minimal build out and can be accomplished in the timeframe needed. Criteria used to analyze facilities include:

- Central location — easy access from major roadways, allowing students and staff from various areas to reach the facilities easily. The facility will have adequate space for a CEO's office, a conference room, office space for confidential IEP or other student-related meetings, and a break room/kitchenette.
- A certificate of occupancy, air-conditioning, heating and illuminated fluorescent lights, male and female bathrooms, parking, handicapped accessible, and fully equipped in accordance with fire and life safety standards. .
- Necessary infrastructure to support the computer network and telephone system.
- In compliance with or capable of modification to bring them into compliance with all local building, zoning and health and safety requirements.
- Meet all local minimum Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
- Ample parking accommodation.
- Comprised of approximately 20% office space and 80% open area for cubicles and collaboration space.
- Secure location for storing testing materials and protected student data.

---

[59] Source:
http://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Codes%20and%20Regulations/Basic%20Education%20Circulars/Purd ons%20Statutes/Cyber%20Charter%20School%20Use%20of%20Physical%20Facilities.pdf

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will take the necessary steps to secure the Certificate of Occupancy for the school site.

Renovation to the Facility and Compliance with Applicable Building Codes

Pennwood Cyber Charter School's space demolition and subsequent build-out, will result in a typical office environment. The landlord will provide turnkey solutions with standard building finishes, pursuant to a Computer Aided Design (CAD) test fit provided to the landlord by Pennwood. This method of securing space – with the landlord responsible for demo and build-out enables Pennwood to mitigate risk in standing up the workspace and take advantage of the landlord's experience in meeting local building codes. Pennwood will provide the space layouts for the school facility for landlord and local building authority review and approval.

Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities

The site will meet all local minimum Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. It will include at least one conference room with doors for use in IEP conferences and other special education related activities. The facilities will comply with all applicable state and local health and safety requirements. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow applicable city planning review procedures.

Services of the Facility

Heating, ventilating, lighting, and water will be supplied to the premises by the landlord as part of the lease agreement. Pennwood will contract for janitorial services to maintain a clean environment within the premises as well as operations and maintenance services. These are accounted for in the budget.

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

Plan for Daily Facility Maintenance

The lease for the site will provide for necessary repairs.

Pennwood will source and contract with a reputable janitorial service for its cleaning needs. To the extent that the landlords are not required in the lease to maintain the equipment in the premises (e.g., HVAC), then Pennwood Cyber Charter School will source and contract with reputable contractors and enter into service agreements. These costs are accounted for in the budget.

Maintaining Facility on an Extended Basis

Pennwood will contract with a reputable management company to maintain the property on an extended basis throughout the lease term.

Pennwood will take the necessary steps to secure the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for the site in accordance with Pennsylvania Code 34 Chapter 403.46 requirements. Such CO may be for the entire facility and may include an updated CO as required by the local building code official for the school premises.

Acquisition of a Facility

The School's cyber education model requires only leased office space as the school site for the administrators to conduct school operations. This significantly reduces financial risks associated with large debt obligations that are often assumed by traditional schools.

E. Describe facility financing plans.

Facility Financing Plans

With the anticipation of utilizing leased facilities, the Board does not intend to secure any long-term debt to finance the purchase of a school facility.

The School's build-out will be an office environment suitable for optimizing site operations. The landlord will provide a turn-key solution with standard building finishes based on the CAD test fit. Pennwood anticipates capital outlay to occupy the leased space to be minimized by selecting site largely laid out to meet its needs, thereby limiting capital outlay to furniture and equipment, not Leasehold Improvements.

IV.3 Liability and Insurance

Explanation: Provide evidence of insurability in all areas identified.

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

Insurance Coverage Plans: Health, General Liability, Property, Director and Officer's Liability Coverage

Per Pennsylvania charter school law, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will offer the same health care benefit to that of the local school district where Pennwood's administrative office is located, which is the Central York School District. The school district offers one Qualified High Deductible Health Plan option for medical coverage. Pennwood will offer two plans, one Health Savings Plan option with a high deductible and an Open Access plan for medical coverage. Both plans offer the same (or better) key services to employees when compared to Central York School District's plan. In an effort to determine the most appropriate plan for its staff, Pennwood also considered the size of the deductible, out of pocket maximums, co-pays and size of network. In addition to a choice in medical plans, Pennwood's comprehensive health package will include dental coverage, vision coverage, life insurance, a 403(b) retirement plan, short- and long-term disability insurance, as well as paid leave (vacation, personal, sick, bonding, serious illness in the family).

An amount equaling 24% of employee payroll has been allocated for these benefits, an amount sufficient to provide for a competitive package of health benefits. This rate is subject to change in future years to be consistent with the health benefits market.

Business Insurance Coverage

The School will maintain a comprehensive insurance program in place as dictated by applicable laws and the approved charter. The insurance program will include, but is not limited to Commercial General

Liability, Sexual Abuse and Molestation, Educator's Legal Liability, Crime (Employee Dishonesty), Property, and Automobile coverage. The policies will cover the School's operations, extracurricular activities, and volunteer activities. Pennwood has been added as a named insured under the existing comprehensive Pearson insurance program in order to take advantage of cost savings due to competitive national package pricing (see Appendix E for the insurance certificate and the policy update). The cost for such insurance coverage is included in the schedule of fees the Board will pay Pearson. Pearson will maintain and keep in force the insurance policies and limits no less than such amounts as outlined to cover insurable risks associated with operations under the Statement of Agreement provided in Appendix N. Pennwood has applied for Directors' and Officers' coverage and has budgeted $12,600 for this, which is more than sufficient to cover this expense. Health insurance and workers compensation insurance costs are included in the benefits fee paid to Pearson under the Statement of Agreement.

IV.4 Child Accounting

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

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

Enrollment Procedures

Equal Opportunity Student Recruitment Plan

Student recruitment and enrollment policies need to be balanced with the mutual goals of ensuring that families are aware of their choices with the Board's need to be fiscally conservative. Enrollment will follow all Pennsylvania rules and regulations generally beginning in March for the school year starting in mid-August.

Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will regularly disclose full details about its program and encourage families to carefully consider its academic and parental involvement demands before applying. Pennwood will also provide tools (such as contact with other parents, with permission, and contact with a school counselor, if desired) to help parents decide whether Pennwood is truly the right fit for their children and themselves.

As stated previously, Pennwood will contract with Pearson to implement and conduct the enrollment process on behalf of the School, under the oversight of the Board and in accordance with enrollment and withdrawal procedures adopted by the Board and reviewed by Board Counsel, which are consistent with local, state, and federal law. The enrollment policies will be reviewed by Board Counsel and approved by the Board as part of the overall school handbook.

A dedicated Enrollment and Customer Engagement Department will provide student enrollment, customer service, and placement support, as well as enrollment processing, set up, and support in compliance with local, state, and Federal law, and acts as the school's agent throughout the enrollment process. The enrollment process is fully integrated with and supported through the EMS.

Families may commence the enrollment process online using the EMS or by calling a toll-free number for assistance. The EMS is available to students and their families, and to other authorized users according to their permissions, 24/7/365.

A detailed description of the Enrollment Procedures is provided in Section I.4.F of this application.

Reports of Enrollment and Withdrawals

As noted in prior sections, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow Section 1748-A of the Charter School Law. Within 15 days of enrolling a student, Pennwood and the parent or guardian, will notify the student's school district of residence of the enrollment through the use of the notification form developed by the PDE. If the student's school district receiving the notification determines that the student is not a resident of the school district:

- Within seven days of receipt of the notice of enrollment, the school district shall notify Pennwood and the PDE that the student is not a resident of the school district. Notification of nonresidence shall include the basis for the determination.
- Within seven days of notification under subparagraph (i), Pennwood shall review the notification of nonresidence, respond to the school district and provide a copy of the response to the PDE.

If Pennwood agrees that the student is not a resident of the school district, it will determine the proper district of residence and notify the correct district of residence of the enrollment through use of the notification form developed by the PDE.

If Pennwood reconfirms that the student is a resident of the school district, it will indicate so in the response. The school district may then appeal to the PDE for a final decision.

If a student becomes ineligible or leaves the charter school, the School will ensure all appropriate paperwork is submitted and/or forwarded to the new school and the EMS will be updated. As per Section 1748-A of Charter School Law, Pennwood, and the parent or guardian, will provide written notification to the school district of residence using the Charter School Notification form within 15 days following the withdrawal of a student. The Charter School Notification form includes the student's name, last known address, and withdrawal date.

Attendance Procedures

Students in a cyber school program will not have physical classrooms but still must meet all regulatory requirements for attending public schools. Attendance will be tracked and reported through the EMS. Learning Coaches will ensure that students meet their school's attendance requirements, and that the student's attendance is properly documented within the EMS.

While students will have a great deal of flexibility regarding when and where they complete their coursework, they will nevertheless be held fully accountable for meeting all state-mandated attendance requirements. Attendance recorded by the Learning Coach and verified by teachers will ensure Pennwood is properly calculating and adequately monitoring that students complete 25 hours per week (grades K-5) or 28 hours per week (grades 6-12) and 195 instructional days per school year (due to the 3 week interim term).

Entering attendance is expected to be taken seriously as a regular part of the school day for the Learning Coach. Pennwood will verify that the attendance records are accurate, which includes not only the attendance hours recorded by the Learning Coach, but also the lesson and assignment completion rates and the amount of communication the student has with the teacher. During course design and alignment, lesson and assignment completion times are estimated, thus student lesson and assignment completion can be used to estimate the amount of student time spent on learning.

Student attendance will be verified by both teachers and Learning Coaches and logged within the EMS. All students must complete assigned lessons and submit assessments. Students and/or their Learning

Coaches must also participate in/respond to telephone calls, email messages, and/or web conferencing (LiveLesson sessions) contacts, as well as in-person contacts (if required) with a teacher during the School's regularly scheduled school hours.

Teachers also verify attendance records on a regular basis. If a teacher has concerns about the validity of a student's attendance records, they may revise the student's recorded hours of attendance-based work completion rates and/or contact the School's manager of engagement for further assistance. A Learning Coach will be notified if attendance records are changed. Therefore, even if a Learning Coach records a high number of instructional hours in the attendance records, if a student's work completion rates are not on track and/or if they fail to communicate on a regular basis with the teacher, they will be flagged for review using an Approaching Alarm or Alarm status. This Approaching Alarm or Alarm status is displayed in the EMS and will require follow-up action from the school to ensure that the student completes his or her lessons, assessments, and required weekly hours of attendance. In reviewing attendance documentation, teachers must determine that each student has met or exceeded the required amount of instructional time stipulated by state regulations.

Pennwood's administration will monitor and review attendance records on a weekly basis. After a predetermined amount of time (usually 10 days), the EMS will no longer allow a teacher or Learning Coach to edit past attendance records. Any requests for adjustments to the "locked" records must first go to the homeroom teacher (in writing via email) for review and approval and then to the Manager of Engagement for adjustment.

While Pennwood will not be kept open for students or staff on weekends and select holidays, students may record attendance hours on Saturday and/or Sunday to meet their weekly requirements. However, if a student does not participate in school activities on any day Monday through Friday, their Learning Coach MUST enter 0 hours on this day.

These expectations and procedures for attendance will be documented in the School Handbook, alongside the state requirements for weekly and annual hours of instruction. Parents must agree to the policies in the Handbook when completing enrollment. Attendance procedures will be addressed in trainings for all stakeholders (Learning Coaches, students, teachers, and administrators). If a student accrues too many unexcused absences, Pennwood will follow Pennsylvania law in reporting non-attendance and truancy.

Unexcused Absences and Truancy

Per section 2E of the Basic Education Circular, Compulsory Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences, (24 P.S. §§ 13-1326 – 1354), in order to actively engage cases of habitual truancy, Pennwood staff will report cases when a student has been absent three days, or their equivalent, without a lawful excuse. If a pattern of truancy develops, the School will initiate a systemic response to address student attendance which will first include a Student Attendance Improvement Conference and a Student Attendance Improvement Plan. Pennwood staff will engage with parents neglectful in providing written excuses or written excuses in a timely fashion.

Regular attendance is imperative to maximize student learning. Pennwood will offer flexibility regarding how many hours each day students spend on school work and which days of the week they complete that work. Due to this flexibility, Pennwood will have a zero tolerance policy for truancy. Parents will be held legally responsible for ensuring that their students are fully participating in school, even if they have designated another adult as their student's Learning Coach.

In order to avoid truancy, the parent must ensure that the following activities take place:

- Learning Coach enters attendance hours each day of school;
- Student completes all assigned lessons and assessments;
- Student participates in educational activities for an appropriate number of hours, as outlined in the School Handbook;
- Student is available for regularly scheduled telephone calls with teachers;
- Student attends all assigned LiveLesson® sessions;
- Student demonstrates that they are doing their own school work;
- Student attends mandatory state testing; and
- Learning Coach communicates with the homeroom teacher in advance if student needs to deviate from the regular school calendar (for example, switching a vacation and school day).

If a student's teachers become aware that the student is not fully participating in school as required by state law and Board policy, the student may be marked with an unexcused absence at the teacher's discretion. In addition, the Manager of Engagement may override the number of attendance hours previously entered by a Learning Coach by entering the code for an unexcused absence (U) if the student's teachers believe the student has not participated as required. The final decision about whether an absence is considered unexcused will be made by the CEO. Missing a day of school will be defined as missing a day's worth of hours in one week.

Child Accounting

When billing resident school districts for local revenue, charter schools are required to calculate Average Daily Membership (ADM) for each student. Pennwood will use the policies listed herein to establish the First Day Educated and Last Day Educated for each student. The Board will contract with Pearson to provide district billing services. Pearson will be responsible for overseeing child accounting and the services provided with oversight from the Board, especially the Board Treasurer and the independent third party who will review Pennwood's financials semi-annually.

V. ADMINISTRATION

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

V.1 Recruiting and Marketing Plan

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

Publicizing Pennwood Cyber Charter School

Upon approval of the school, Pennwood, with the support of Pearson through the Statement of Agreement, will begin actively recruiting families that represent and promote a diverse, full cultural, demographic, and socioeconomic range throughout the state of Pennsylvania. Pennwood will publicize to attract a sufficient pool of eligible students. The outreach mix will include brand advertising, online advertising, public relations, and other paid media activities covering varied geographies as well as reaching diverse students and families in the state in addition to organic grassroots efforts that have already begun. The outreach strategy and tactics may shift throughout the year to maximize awareness of the school.

We will use a variety of means to inform families about the School's services and provide them an opportunity to enroll:

- Direct mail: Pennwood may have the potential to send direct mail campaigns announcing the School to families with students throughout Pennsylvania. In a typical mailing, a post card is sent encouraging parents to visit the website and/or contact the call center.

- Information sessions: Pennwood may conduct multiple virtual information sessions to share information about the school and respond to questions from families. The School will educate families about its school model, including information on its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements.

- Website: A website specific to Pennwood Cyber Charter School has been created and will be maintained. Once the School is approved, the website will contain information about the school, its approach, its curriculum, teachers, and FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and their answers. The site will also include enrollment information and procedures, information sessions schedules, and other useful tools for prospective students and their families.

- Family Enrollment Counselors: There will be a dedicated team of family enrollment counselors that can speak to families about the School, answer questions they may have, and help guide them through the enrollment process.

- Media Outreach: Pennwood will make use of paid media in the form of brand advertising. The School will also make use of non-paid/earned media, primarily to shape public opinion, raise awareness of the school and share family/school news.

- Referrals/Word of Mouth: As Pennwood grows, it anticipates that an increasing number of families who come to the School will enroll due to positive feedback received from their friends, community members, and other school families.

- Online Outreach: Families will be able to find and gain more information about Pennwood through paid search efforts (i.e., through families doing searches on Google or other browsers), paid social media and digital display advertising.

Outreach

As mentioned above, upon approval of the charter, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will actively recruit families that represent the full cultural, demographic, and socioeconomic range of Pennsylvania. The School will use a variety of means to inform families about its services and provide them an opportunity to enroll, including:

Information sessions: Pennwood will conduct multiple information sessions to assure that families from a variety of communities are able to participate. Once approved, more formal Information sessions will be held online, and families will attend the session from home via their computers. Pennwood will educate families about the school and provide a complete array of information, including its curriculum, teaching methods, technology resources and testing requirements. Some of this work has already begun. The Board hosted 12 informal, in-person information sessions, as well as created an online information session available 24/7 on its website prior to submitting the charter application. Sessions were held on the dates/times listed previously in Section I.5.B.

Telephone and e-mail outreach: Pennwood will contact families who request information by telephone and electronic mail, in order to provide valuable program information that prepares families for a successful cyber school experience.

Telephone/e-mail information service: Pennwood will launch and maintain a toll-free information line and an email information service dedicated to answering parents' questions.

Community and youth services partnerships: As part of its outreach process, Pennwood can provide information about the school to the community that may include youth-serving organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, parent groups, health-related organizations, and organizations for young actors, dancers, and athletes.

V.2 Admissions Policy

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

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

Admission Methods

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will be open to all eligible students and will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices. Pennwood will attract those students and families who are most committed to student success in a cyber school setting.

As part of that process, Pennwood will provide parents with a clear and accurate picture of the cyber learning experience so they can make the most appropriate choices for their students. These efforts may be accomplished through telephone conversations, emailed communications, parent-led virtual sessions, and virtual information sessions. The School will strongly encourage families to review the school website, talk to enrollment team members, and attend an information session, explaining the benefits and importance of gaining a clear understanding of the School and what to expect.

Pennwood's admissions procedures will comply with IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) 2004 and Civil Rights protections. The School will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and will comply with the same federal and state audit requirements as do other public schools in Pennsylvania.

Pennwood will provide enrollment policies on the website and in the application process.

The Admissions Policy is included in Appendix S with the Board Policies.

Eligibility Criteria for Selecting Students

As per Section 1723-A, Pennwood will be open to all students statewide and will not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district.

Students must meet minimum/maximum age requirements and will be subject to Pennsylvania current age restrictions for public school admission and funding or qualify for an exception as noted in state regulations.

For students in Kindergarten, Pennwood will enroll students who meet the admission age that is determined by their resident school district.

For students who are entering school for the first time in first grade, Pennwood will follow 24 P.S. § 13-1304 Admission of beginners, which states, **"**Admission shall be limited to beginners who have attained the age of five years and seven months before the first day of September if they are to be admitted in the fall, and to those who have attained the age of five years and seven months before the first day of February if they are to be admitted at the beginning of the second semester."

As per 22 Pa. Code Section 11.12, the maximum age for high school students is 21 years of age.

Specific state requirements for enrollment eligibility will be available for interested families on the School's website. Pennwood will abide by all federal, state, and local policies and guidelines for student admission and will not impose admission requirements that are inconsistent with these policies and guidelines. Pennwood, as applicable under law, will include admission and selection policies on its publicly accessible website to ensure transparency for PDE, school districts, students, and families regarding the school's admissions processes.

The School will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless students. Students who meet the definition of homeless shall not be barred from enrolling due to lack of required documents. The CEO or his/her designee will serve as the liaison for homeless students.

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

Administrative Procedures for Special Education Legal Compliance

Open and Fair Admissions Process: Pennwood Cyber Charter School admissions procedures will comply with IDEA 2004 and Civil Rights protections. The School will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and will comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other public schools in in Pennsylvania.

The Special Education policies, including non-discrimination policies, are included in Appendix C.

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

Timetable for Admitting Students

Tentative Enrollment and Lottery Dates (Subject to Change based on Charter Approval) :

Open Enrollment begins: Tuesday 2/1/2023

Lottery Determination Date/Close of Open Enrollment: Friday 3/1/2023

Lottery If Needed: Monday 4/11/2023

Admission Lottery Plan for Students Within and Outside the District

Pennwood Cyber Charter School is committed to admitting as many students in grades K-12 by Year 5 as possible and does not envision holding a lottery. However, should enrollment limits become necessary, the following procedure will be implemented:

Each year, Pennwood will have an open application period for the following school year which will take place in the spring. The dates of the open application period will be announced on the School's website. The open application period will consist of at least 30 days. No applicants will be enrolled during the open application period. During this period applicants who are interested in enrolling must 1) complete the online registration form, which will be made available on the School's website under "Enrollment" or 2) by calling Enrollment to request assistance. At the conclusion of the open application period, the School will determine the total number of new applicants eligible for the lottery by grade level or cluster, as well as determine which applicants are eligible for the enrollment preferences as set forth in the lottery policy.

If the School is not oversubscribed and no lottery is needed, students will be enrolled on a first come/first served basis as they complete the enrollment process.

Upon accounting for enrollment preferences of certain students as set forth in the lottery policy, if there are more completed applications than available slots at the end of the application period, a random lottery will be conducted. The lottery may be conducted by grade level or by grade clusters:

- Grades K-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12

The order in which the grade levels or grade clusters are drawn, and the total number of students selected for each grade level or grade cluster may vary each year in consideration of the School's overall enrollment limit, the expected number of returning students and any of their eligible siblings who complete an enrollment application during the open application period.

After Pennwood's first year, the School, in accordance with 24 P.S. § 17-1723-A and pursuant to Pennwood's Charter Agreement will give enrollment preference to:

- Students who have been admitted to the school through an appropriate admission process and who remain in attendance through subsequent grades;

- Siblings of students already admitted to or attending Pennwood Cyber Charter School; and

- Children of those individuals who have actively participated in the development of the cyber charter school. The spaces will be reserved until a published date and will be released if not filled.

In order to ensure a random lottery without the possibility of human bias and error, Pennwood will utilize a computer-generated randomization. The program will randomly select a student name from the pool of enrollment applicants for a specific grade level or grade cluster until the number of available slots are filled, or the pool of enrollment applications is exhausted.

The primary caretakers of the selected students will receive an email notification within five business days after the lottery and must confirm their acceptance and complete the enrollment process, including submission of documents as required by Pennsylvania law, by a set deadline. Students who do not confirm acceptance and complete the enrollment process by the set deadline will forfeit their spot to the next eligible students on the waiting list.

The full Board approved lottery policy, important dates and information about capacity will be posted on the public website and available to parents in the registration process.

.

D. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a nondiscriminatory fashion.

Nondiscriminatory Policies to Further the Mission

Pennwood Cyber Charter School's mission is to empower students to meet their unique educational and life goals through flexible pacing, college preparatory programming, and practical career skill development

Through its partnership and outreach efforts, Pennwood will strive to achieve a diverse student body. Through extensive community outreach and full disclosure about the School's program, Pennwood will have broad outreach throughout the state and parents will have a clear understanding of the cyber learning experience so that they can make the best choices for their students. The School will therefore attract those students and families who are most committed to student success in a cyber school setting from across the state.

Through the enrollment process as described in Section I.4.F and the Admissions and Eligibility Criteria set forth in Section V.2.A of this application, students will be admitted in a non-discriminatory manner. Following enrollment, they will be provided with Personalized Performance Learning to maximize individual achievement. Through Pennwood's partnership, dedicated teams will support the families extensively throughout the enrollment process to ensure that they are supported and understand the cyber school model.

V.3 Human Resource Information

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

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

Standards for Hiring Process

The Pennwood Board will employ all staff of the school including the CEO and teachers. The Board has chosen to partner with Pearson via the Statement of Agreement to provide human resource services, including recruiting, to ensure the School is staffed by well-trained and effective cyber learning professionals. Pennwood's partner has extensive experience with over 20 years in recruiting, screening, and qualifying staff for high-quality cyber schools. Pearson serves and reports to the Board and will be held accountable to the Board. While Pearson may recommend staff for hire, the Pennwood Board will be the decisionmaker regarding hiring decisions. However, the Board may delegate some authority regarding hiring decisions to the CEO.

Hiring a Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Through the Statement of Agreement with the Board, Pearson will provide administrative support to the Board as it recruits the CEO and then also provides administrative support to the CEO as he/she recruits the staff. It is anticipated that the recruiting of the CEO will begin immediately upon charter approval, as the CEO needs to be hired prior to teacher and staff recruitment.

The search process will begin with developing a comprehensive job description, including minimum qualifications (i.e., education level, years of experience) and requirements, and posting the position and advertising through multiple avenues. Strategies to attract highly qualified staff will be implemented to include posting on several targeted recruitment sites as well as posting on the professional and institutional websites that may include Aurora Institute, National Charter School Association, Teachers-Teachers.com, and National Association of Secondary School Principals. The interview process will consist of the following stages as approved by the Board: 1) prescreening digital interview; 2) live digital interview; 3) virtual panel interview; 4) professional reference check; and 5) interview with representatives from the Board. At the conclusions of each stage, the Board will be updated and consulted regarding next steps. In addition, all candidates will undergo a thorough screening procedure, including background checks and comprehensive reference checks, as well as other checks and pre-employment requirements as required by state law. The Pennwood Board would make the final decision regarding the hiring of a CEO at a public Board meeting in compliance with the law.

Criteria for Selecting and Retaining the CEO

The CEO will ideally hold an advanced degree with a minimum of five years teaching experience and management or administrative experience. A former CEO or school leader who has experience in a cyber school setting or is technologically proficient with good communication skills is preferred. The CEO will build consensus and inspire teachers to teach, students to learn, and parents to engage in their child's learning while following the mission of the school. The CEO will be responsible for the overall school operation including, carrying out the vision and mission of the School, managing the budget, working with the Pennwood Board, managing the Principal(s) and other key administrators, legal compliance and interfacing with PDE and other governmental agencies. The CEO will hold appropriate administrative certification and undergo all required background checks.

The CEO will be offered a competitive compensation with annual salary reviews. In addition, the CEO will have access to a competitive benefits package, including health benefits (medical, dental, and vision coverage), a 403(b) retirement plan, as well as a variety of voluntary benefits including tuition assistance, a confidential employee assistance program, discount programs, term life and accident insurance, and other voluntary benefits. The CEO will also receive annual paid time off to include annual holidays, vacation, personal, and sick leave, as well as additional forms of leave such as bereavement leave and jury duty leave, as needed.

Ideally, the Board anticipates hiring a candidate in the spring of 2023. In addition, all candidates will undergo thorough screening procedures including background checks, comprehensive reference checks, a technology skills assessment, and a social media background check, as well as others checks as required by state law.

Daily management of the school will be the CEO's responsibility while overall governance will be the responsibility of the Board. The Board will annually evaluate the CEO based upon performance. Annual performance will be based upon meeting school goals, evaluation of assigned competencies, and input from other key stakeholders. The Board will adopt pay scales, performance criteria, a performance appraisal system, and disciplinary policies for all employees, including the CEO. Explanation of such policies will be integrated into the Employee Handbook adopted by the Board. A draft Employee Handbook is included in Appendix T.

Other Administrators

Principals

In Year One, there will be one Principal. By Year Two, there will be two Principals and Year Three, there will be three Principals. The Principal(s) will report to the CEO. In consultation with the CEO, Principal(s) will assist in the daily operations of the School. They will be responsible for implementing the processes and procedures that will help Pennwood meet its goals and for students to be academically successful, including oversight of curriculum. Principal(s) will work with parents, students, support staff, and teachers who virtually facilitate the student instructional program. All Principals will be required to have a Pennsylvania Administrative certification; a minimum of 5 years of relevant work experience as a leader in education; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; demonstrated ability to work well in a fast-paced environment; be technologically proficient; experienced in managing people; and the ability to travel as needed.

Assistant Principals

Assistant Principals will work collaboratively with the Principals. They will manage all the site-based, school operations, exclusive of Special Education. Additionally, they will work closely with the enrollment, technical support, materials management, fulfillment, finance, human resources, payroll, and facilities management functions. They will help the Principals with implementation of the instructional program, including managing staff members. They will manage a range of special projects. Qualifications will include Pennsylvania Administrative certification; a minimum of 5 years of relevant work experience (teaching and/or administrative); some operational or logistics experience and/or administrative or management experience; relevant advanced degree is preferred, education experience required; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; demonstrated ability to work well in a fast-paced environment; be technologically proficient; experience in managing people a plus; and ability to travel as needed.

Director of Specialized Programs

The Director of Specialized Programs will manage the C-Term and badging (Engagement and Career Competency) opportunities for Pennwood. Since badging and C-Term are about engaging students in their learning, the Director will also oversee the Manager of Engagement and the student engagement specialists. This team will work with parents, teachers, and students to keep students on-track, progressing and working in their courses. They will do this through relationship building, constant communication, accountability and professional development. Qualification for the Director of Specialized Programs include Pennsylvania Administration certification; 5 years of relevant work experience; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; demonstrated creativity in developing new school programs; technologically advanced; experience in managing people required; and ability to travel as needed.

Director of Data and Student Assessments

The Director of Data and Student Assessments oversees the school's testing program (from benchmarking to required state exams). The Director oversees the data capture, analysis and coaching derived from data to help drive improvement in student learning outcomes. The Director will work closely with principals and teachers to make sure that students are prepared for testing, and that benchmark tests results are used to drive instruction and remediation. The Director will also ensure that all state testing proctors complete the online Pennsylvania State Test Administration Training and any other state testing requirements. Qualifications will include Pennsylvania teacher certification; teaching experience; technologically advanced; experience with assessments for grades K-12 required.

Director of Operations

In the fourth year of the school, due to the expected increase in enrollment, a Director of Operations will be added. The Director will be responsible for all operations of the School. The Director will manage the Office Manager and the administrative assistant staff, as well as the Principals and Teachers. This position will allow the CEO to focus on other critical areas of the School program. The Director of Operations should be an experienced, Pennsylvania certified School Administrator with extensive experience managing people; instructional leadership experience; at least 5 years as a Principal; virtual school experience preferred; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; technologically advanced; ability to travel as needed.

Director of Special Education

The Director of Special Education will be responsible for managing special education site-based school operations. This includes reviewing the student's documentation (IEP, Section 504 plan, and Evaluation Reports), recommending course placement, managing special education teachers, liaising with school districts, maintaining required compliance timelines, adhering to policies and procedures outlined by IDEA, Section 504, and PDE, ensuring specialized direct instruction is delivered, organizing related service providers, and monitoring accommodation and modification implementation. Qualifications for the Director of Special Education include a minimum of 5 years of Special Education teaching experience and management experience. Other requirements include Pennsylvania Supervisory Certificate – Special Education PK-12 credential; advance degree; technologically proficient with experience in online IEP tools; excellent communication skills, both oral and written, management experience; and occasional travel.

Director of Counseling

The Director of Counseling will work with the School leadership team to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. The Director will provide direction to staff and will assist students and parents in understanding and meeting graduation requirements, course selection and scheduling, post-secondary school planning, social/emotional needs, and crisis intervention. Qualifications include a minimum of 5 years counseling or teaching experience and counseling; management experience preferred; Pennsylvania Counseling Credential; advanced degree required; technologically proficient; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; and occasional travel.

Administrative Assistants

Administrative Assistants will be responsible for daily administrative tasks of Pennwood Cyber Charter School such as answering phones and email, receiving visitors, assisting the Principals, Assistant Principals, Other Administrators, and teachers with administrative tasks, filing and other duties as assigned. Qualifications will include administrative experience; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; and highly organized and punctual.

Teachers

Pennsylvania certified teachers will teach students in grades K-12 and support the instructional programs. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Pennwood will use Pennsylvania–certificated teachers for all core subjects as well as certificated teachers for elective courses. In addition to certification, qualifications will include reading endorsement (for elementary teachers) or certification preferred; Special education endorsements or certifications required or preferred depending on role; ESOL endorsement or certification required or preferred depending on role; working knowledge of the Response to Intervention process; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; highly organized and punctual; willingness to travel on occasion for outreach and state testing events; ability to work remotely, if necessary; and ability to work some occasional evening hours, as needed to support students and families.

Teachers, who hold appropriate certification, will be responsible for all of the following for each course in which a student is enrolled:

1. Improving learning by planned instruction.

2. Diagnosing the pupil's learning needs.

3. Assessing learning, assigning grades, providing targeted feedback, and determining advancement.

4. Reporting outcomes to administrators and parents or legal guardians.

The Special Education Teachers will teach students with learning or cognitive disabilities and manage instructional programs for students with learning or cognitive disabilities. They will consult regularly with Learning Coaches and students to ensure that each student successfully completes his/her instructional program. Special Education Teachers will participate in all steps of the IEP process. They will work closely with other Teachers and district/state professionals to ensure that the School's special education program is successful and operating in compliance with federal and state regulations. The Special Education Teacher will utilize technology to deliver online instruction and teach students. Qualifications include a degree in Special Education or related education field; valid Special Education credential in Pennsylvania; experience in policy (IDEA) and/or administration with Special Education; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; and willingness to travel on occasion for outreach and state testing events (may require occasional overnight travel).

The Counselor/Advisory teacher will assist students and Learning Coaches with course selection and scheduling and will be the initial point of contact for student concerns that span multiple subject areas as well as non-academic issues. The Counselor/Advisory teacher will become an expert on course and credit requirements to establish counseling processes. The Counselor/advisory teacher may also carry a teaching load in addition to advisory duties. Counselors will be required to have a counseling certification, and Advisory teachers will be required to have a Pennsylvania teacher certification. Qualifications may include Pennsylvania Professional School Counselor certification and/or Pennsylvania teacher certification; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; excellent attention to detail and organizational skills; and willingness to travel on occasion for outreach and state testing events (may require occasional overnight travel).

The EL Lead Teacher and EL Teachers will maintain student files, screen new students for eligibility of EL services, provide instructional consultation to Learning Coaches, and provide direct instruction to EL students via LiveLesson sessions and phone calls. They will also coordinate instructional planning and evaluation with the core content teachers to provide meaningful access to instruction in all content areas, conduct progress monitoring throughout the school year, and create and implement targeted interventions based on data from progress monitoring. In addition, they will administer the annual EL assessment, monitor exited EL students for academic progress using state-specific criteria for two years and stay current on state legislation pertaining to EL students. Qualifications include being highly qualified to teach English Learners (appropriate to grade level responsibilities) in Pennsylvania; ESOL endorsement or certification required; experience directly teaching English Learners; bilingual preferred; strong technology skills; excellent communication skills, both oral and written; willingness to travel for school-based meetings, trainings, outreach and state testing events; ability to work remotely; and ability to work some occasional evening hours, as needed to support students and families.

Background Checks

Details of the background check clearances, standards, and requirements are located in sections (F) and (G). The School's background check and clearance policy, which includes the employment history review, is attached in Appendix S with Board Policies. In conducting its background check clearances, Pennwood will comply with the Criminal History Record Information Act, 18 Pa C.S.A. § 9125.

Employment history reviews will be conducted for applicants who will be employed in positions involving direct contact with children. Employees of independent contractors must participate in the employment history review prior to the start of employment with a new school entity even though they remain employed by the same independent contractor (24 PS 1-111.1.)

These additional steps will be followed for all applicants who are educators even if the applicant is not being hired for a position for which certification is required.

Even though the Pennwood Board has plans to retain Pearson for staff recruitment, the Board will be responsible for approving all school positions.

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

Staff Size

The staffing plan that follows and is also included previously promotes low student-to-teacher ratios, appropriate instructional support, and resources allowing teachers to teach and students to learn. The staffing needs are aligned with the mission and vision of the School supporting the breadth and depth of the cyber school environment. The EMS and the additional support through lessons plans, curriculum,

educational resources, staff, professional development, and technology support provides the school staff and leadership the opportunity to focus on the personalized learning experience of each student.

Prior to Year 1 starting, the Board anticipates hiring the staff listed below in the spring of 2023 to prepare for start-up and school launch in fall 2023. The Board will hire the CEO first. Then the CEO will hire the remaining staff.

- CEO
- Director of Specialized Programs
- Director of Special Education
- Director of Counseling

Position	Year 1 2023-24	Year 2 2024-25	Year 3 2025-26	Year 4 2026-27	Year 5 2027-28
Total Number of Students	1,800	3,000	4,500	6,200	8,200
Elementary (K-5) Teachers	14	23	38	56	78
Secondary (6-12) Teachers	44	73	106	141	182
Special Education Teachers	16	28	45	65	91
English Learner Teachers	1	2	3	3	5
Social Workers	3	5	8	10	14
Counselors	5	8	11	16	21
Advisory Teachers	9	15	21	28	36
CEO	1	1	1	1	1
Principal	1	2	3	3	3
Assistant Principal	3	4	6	9	13
Director of Special Education	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Director of Special Education	1	2	3	5	7
Administrative Assistant	3	6	10	14	19
Director of Counseling	1	1	1	1	1
Dual Enrollment Coordinator	1	1	1	1	1
Office Manager	1	1	1	1	1
Director of Data & Student Assessments	1	1	2	2	2
Assistant Manager of Counseling	1	1	1	1	2
Director of Specialized Programs	1	1	1	1	1
Specialized Programs Assistant Coord.	3	3	3	3	3
Director of Operations	0	0	0	1	1
Manager of Engagement	1	1	1	1	1
Student Engagement Specialists	9	15	23	31	41
School Nurse	1	1	1	1	1
Total Staff	122	196	291	397	526
Total Teacher (EL, SPED, SEC, Advisory) (not counselors)	84	141	213	293	392
Student-to-Teacher Ratio	21:1	21:1	21:1	21:1	21:1

Teacher/Student Ratio

The student-to-teacher ratio remains consistent at 21:1 from Year 1 to Year 5. Cyber learning allows for a flexible staffing plan that can grow, retract, or expand with the enrollment of the school and is not limited by facility space. Since classroom management, lesson plan development, and scheduling issues are minimized in a cyber classroom, slightly higher class ratios than a face-to-face classroom are warranted.

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

Professional Development Opportunities

PENNWOOD CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL

Pennwood Cyber Charter School has engaged Pearson, through the Statement of Agreement (Appendix N), to provide training and professional development for teachers. Training is integrated into the program and aligned with the student curriculum, student pedagogy, student information system, data, evaluation systems, and other services. The professional development team will focus on coordinating, planning, delivering, and continuously supporting professional learning initiatives through a systematic and comprehensive professional development model in consultation with the Pennwood Board and school leadership team. Educators will be provided with professional growth opportunities designed to increase student achievement, personalize learning for students preparing for college and careers, and increase teaching effectiveness. In addition, the CEO will identify specific professional development needs in alignment with school goals that will be addressed. Please see Professional Learning and Training Appendix U for the details on year-round professional development provided for all Pennwood staff members, subject to further enhancement and refinement.

Unique to Pennwood, the School will also provide professional development specific to career readiness, badging and life skills. The Director of Specialized Programs will create specific professional development opportunities each year that are tailored to each year's unique competency focus that will then be disseminated in a teach the teacher model to all educational staff.

The Pennwood Cyber Charter School professional development model is grounded in a teacher competency model that links development and training of teachers to evaluation of learning and performance. The teacher competency model is broken into four areas: Strategic Skills, Efficacy, Operating Skills, and Individual Excellence. Observation of teacher performance uses an aligned observation tool. Teachers also self-assess their growth on these competencies and share with their supervisors as part of the evaluation cycle of determining growth goals, performance indicators, and evidence of competency.

Professional development and training activities for teachers include measures of understanding and application for the content provided. After each activity, teachers respond to a series of questions where they document their understanding and plans for integration of new learning. They maintain these learning reflections in their professional ePortfolio, which is available for reference and discussion with their Professional Learning Communities and in coaching or supervisory situations.

Professional goals are set by teachers, with performance indicators, and documented on a quarterly basis. This process includes a demonstration of learning/application that goes into the ePortfolio. Learning from participation in Professional Learning Communities is part of this process

Teacher Induction Program

During the 2023-24 school year, Pennwood will identify an Induction Coordinator (more than likely an Assistant Principal) and form a Council to develop an induction program for new teachers and education specialists in accordance with the requirements established by Title 22, Chapter 49, Sections 49.16 and 49.83 of the Pennsylvania Code. The Council will:

- Develop the goals and competencies for the induction program,
- Determine how the needs of new teachers will be assessed,
- Define the role of new teacher mentors and the process for selecting mentors,
- Identify monthly activities/topics to support new teachers,
- Identify how teacher participation and program completion will be documented, and
- Define the metrics that will be used to monitor and evaluate the induction program.

The Pennwood Teacher Induction Council will submit their induction plan for state approval prior to August 1, 2024.

The scaffolded, supportive, and intensive training and professional learning sessions described herein, along with additional training from Pennwood staff and collaboration with mentor teachers, will support first year and novice teachers as they develop their skills and become high quality educators and reflective practitioners in the cyber education environment.

Training Content

Teachers will benefit from ongoing and effective professional growth. The training begins with an initial teacher orientation and several days of face-to-face pre-service training. Teachers will build a strong foundation for teaching in the online environment with student success as a focus. Professional Learning Communities (PLC), nationally facilitated professional learning sessions, and weekly updates will keep teachers up to date and on the road to being experts in online learning. Research on effective professional development indicates that professional development must be intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice. Teachers need to try out new ideas and strategies with their students and to reflect on the results of these strategies. Intensive monthly professional development, especially when it includes application of knowledge to planning and instruction, has a greater chance of influencing teaching practices, and in turn, leading to gains in student learning. Pennwood teachers will take part in ongoing professional development activities throughout the year.

Teachers will participate in synchronous and asynchronous professional learning on topics such as:

- The Dynamic Classroom, The Dynamic Classroom Instructional Model, and the role of the Dynamic Classroom Teacher,
- Implementing specific research-based instructional strategies,
- Using effective teaching practices and communication skills for an online environment,
- Utilizing the state and national standards to inform instruction,
- Using technology to engage students in collaborative learning activities, and
- Using data to guide instruction.

The CEO will develop a systematic approach to professional development for all staff. Topics for trainings will be selected based on school goals, student performance data, student needs, national initiatives in education, and research-based best practices. Professional learning sessions will include an evaluation survey to elicit teacher and administrator feedback. Professional learning will be:

- Intensive – Participants will identify the purpose of educational practices and examine how they can be implemented in the online environment. Participants will collaboratively discuss strategies that can be implemented with students.

- Ongoing – New instructional strategies and the latest learning science research will be connected to topics presented and discussed in prior sessions to demonstrate how specific educational practices form the "big picture" of effective instruction. Further discussion and exploration at the school level will strengthen these connections.

- Connected to Practice – Following each session, participants will apply what they have learned to their professional practice. They will integrate precise, targeted strategies into their planning and instruction, and reflect on the outcomes through the Teacher ePortfolio data view, a virtual portfolio which allows them to document their attendance and upload resources related to their professional learning.

Teaching in an online environment offers flexibility and allows for a greater level of professional learning throughout the school year. Although designated professional development days will have a specific focus, additional professional learning support will be available daily. Teachers will have multiple opportunities for seeking assistance and support with instructional strategies for engaging students and families, making decisions based on data, and completing school year cycle tasks in a timely and efficient manner. The School will receive multiple levels of support from Pearson to implement professional development that meets the needs of the teachers and the school.

Teachers will be instructed on how to modify a course through new teacher orientation. Intensive training to teachers and other School staff prior to and throughout the school year will be provided. At the beginning of the year, training sessions focus on the "how to" — the basic tools and skills that teachers need to know and understand to teach in an online environment, navigate the EMS (e.g., how to access the Grade Book, how to modify a lesson), and complete the tasks associated with the School Year Cycle of activities. Before the start of each school year, all teachers will complete the Teacher Orientation Course: Foundations of Instruction. This course will be delivered through the EMS, and contains lessons, assessments, and links to online tutorials. This introductory course supports teachers in transitioning from a brick-and-mortar school to an online school and covers curriculum, assessment, personalizing instruction, school year events, grading, communication, and essential tools in the EMS to monitor and support student learning. Upon successful completion of these courses and assessments, teachers will be ready to begin instruction. Teachers are expected to earn a grade of 80% or higher in this course.

Systemic Professional Development Model
Teachers at Pennwood will receive operational training and professional learning throughout the school year. In addition, several days prior to the start of the school year will focus on pre-planning, school improvement planning, recognizing and identifying specific needs prior to the start of school. and goal setting for teachers and students. During these meetings, school leadership and teachers discuss expectations, processes, policies, and procedures, and conduct trainings. Throughout the year, the CEO will schedule additional time for staff members to meet face-to-face and virtually to collaborate in Professional Learning Communities/Communities of Practice (PLCs). PLCs are data-driven teams focused on student learning outcomes through continuous collaboration and capacity building. In addition, each month, there will be a variety of trainings, touch base sessions, and ad hoc meetings conducted virtually or face-to-face to discuss items based on the school year cycle. For example, there will be trainings prior to state testing, trainings regarding transitions at the semester change, and meetings to discuss student data and student needs.

A variety of synchronous and asynchronous professional learning opportunities will be available to teachers throughout the school year to build effective virtual teaching strategies, stay current in industry trends, and collaborate with colleagues. The systematic approach to professional learning supports the School's Core Standards for Facilitating Student Learning and provides teachers with research based best practices for effective teaching within a virtual environment, including personalizing learning for students, implementing instructional practices aligned to learning science research, and identifying effective online teaching practices designed to increase student achievement.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

As a continuation of synchronous online professional development sessions, Pennwood will implement school-based Professional Learning Communities. This allows for true application of new strategies and resources as teachers personalize instruction and make data-driven decisions. Professional development sessions use evaluation surveys and collaborative tools to elicit teacher and administrator feedback. Audits, evaluations, observations, and site-visits will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the training and to ensure initiatives are implemented with high fidelity.

Additional Professional Learning Resources

During the school year, ongoing professional development sessions will also be offered based on teacher feedback from surveys completed after professional learning sessions, student needs, and other priorities as identified by the CEO and leadership team at the School. In addition, these resources will be available to all school staff to support their professional learning.

- Teacher Orientation: Teacher Orientation is a resource for teachers and school personnel to use all year. It contains policies, procedures, and "how to" components that aid the teachers on a day-to-day basis. These "how to" components have accompanying on-line tutorial segments that visually demonstrate each process.
- Teacher Central: Teacher Central is a website that is easy to navigate and serves as a one stop shop for teachers and staff to find guidance on instructional practices, professional learning, and training resources. Each section contains links to resources to support teacher effectiveness, best practices, and tools designed to personalize the learning experience for students.
- Weekly Newsletters: All teachers will receive a weekly electronic newsletter that highlights improvements to the curriculum and the EMS, teacher tasks associated with the School Year Cycle, new procedures, shared tips, and community-building activities. Additional training in health and safety areas may be included as needed to comply with the school's health and safety policies and/or with state law.
- The Dynamic Classroom Course for Educators: This online resource will allow teachers to understand the connection between the curriculum and best practices that the Dynamic Classroom Teacher uses to bring the asynchronous curriculum to life. It will provide teacher examples to illustrate the instructional practices linked to the curriculum.

Additional Training for Special Education Teachers

Training is provided throughout the year for special education teachers. Extensive training will be provided for the entire school leadership team regarding the identification of students suspected of having a disability and types of services available for all students with disabilities including how to implement the Child Find practices in the online environment. General education and special education teachers will be trained on how to meet the students of individual special education services in the online environment.

Training Provider

Pearson has been recognized for the high quality and excellence of its professional learning opportunities. The Pearson professional learning model has won a Tech & Learning Award of Excellence. Pearson was also recognized as a Codie Award finalist for Best Professional Learning Solution for K-20 Faculty and Administrative Staff. This award recognizes the best educational application or service designed to support PK-12 or postsecondary education institutions in the professional development of faculty and administrative staff.

The Professional Development Model has also been recognized with a silver award for Best Practices for Distance Learning Programming by the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA). This prestigious award recognizes organizations that have designed and delivered outstanding and comprehensive best practices in distance learning programming, including program content and delivery, integration of technology, presentation, and impact on participant learning.

Teacher professional development is critically important in ensuring that the staff is optimally effective at teaching in an online environment and addressing the Pennsylvania Academic Standards in their daily instructional practice. Pennwood will use the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching and the Pearson Core Standards for Facilitating Student Learning as guides for pinpointing necessary teacher skills and professional development requirements.

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

Human Resources Policies: Salaries

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will offer a work environment that provides opportunities for each employee to maximize their potential and meet the highest performance standards.

Pennwood will offer competitive compensation with annual performance-based salary reviews.

Base Salary*	A starting base salary for new teachers will be determined by the point system described below and adjusted based on position. • Tier 1: Base • Tier 2: Base + $2,250 • Tier 3: Base + $4,000 • The positions aligned to each tier are determined by the CEO. Teachers may receive an annual salary increase based on their performance rating.
Career Ladder Positions	Teachers can apply for the following career ladder opportunities and assume additional responsibilities in order to earn additional compensation as follows: Coordinator Teacher – base plus 4% Lead Teacher – base plus 9% Specialist Teacher – base plus 12% Master Teacher – base plus 15%

*Salary increases are contingent on the fiscal and academic performance of the School.

The process for determining the starting base salaries for Certified Teachers is as shown below. (Note: This point system is only relevant for starting salaries and is not used for annual increases.)

STEP 1 – Develop minimum starting salary and point value based on school budget and local comparisons.

STEP 2 – Using the Point Criteria Guidelines below, determine the number of points for an individual teacher candidate. The maximum number of points is 18. Note that the minimum salary and point value is set each year based on competitive market factors and the school budget.

STEP 3 – The total number of points will determine the starting salary of the teacher.

Starting base salary + Relevant work experience points + Relevant degree points + Special skill points = New Hire Base Salary Offer

Point Criteria Guidelines	
Years of relevant work experience	**Points**
0 to 1	0
2 to 5	2
6 to 10	4
11 to 15	6
16 – 20	8
Relevant Degree(s)	**Points**
BA*	0
Multiple BAs	1
BA + MA*	1.5
BA + Multiple MAs	2.5
BA + MA + EdD/PhD	3
Special skill, knowledge and/or ability	**Points**
Languages, technology, cyber experience, tutoring, and substitute teaching	1 - 3

*BA and MA are interchangeable with Bachelor of Science (BS) and Master of Science (MS).

For non-teaching positions, the average salaries were determined based on research of market compensation and financial considerations and incorporating the state-required minimums. Initial employment offers will be based on specific criteria, including years of experience, education, and other relevant skills/qualifications. After the initial hire, compensation increases and merit pay will be based on school goal attainment and fiscal performance.

Employees will have access to a benefits package, including health benefits (medical, dental, and vision coverage) and a retirement plan (403(b)). In addition, employees will have the opportunity to take advantage of a variety of voluntary benefits including tuition assistance, a confidential employee assistance program, certain discount programs, term life and accident insurance, as well as other voluntary benefits.

Employees will also receive annual paid time off to include annual holidays, vacation, personal, and sick leave, as well as additional forms of leave such as bereavement leave and jury duty leave, as needed.

Human Resources Policies: Contracts

All employment is "at-will" as governed by the laws in the state of Pennsylvania. Employment can be terminated by either the employee or the employer at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

Offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory reference and background checks as well as receipt of valid certification documents and fingerprint clearances as required or any other approvals as listed in the offer letter.

Human Resources Policies: Hiring and Dismissal

Hiring

The principles of equal employment opportunity are vital to Pennwood's success and extend to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, assignment, training, compensation, benefits, terminations, educational assistance, social and recreational programs, promotions, and transfers. Pennwood is committed to creating and fostering a work environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment and one in which decisions and terms of employment are not based in any way on race, creed, color, religion or religious affiliation, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, sexual orientation,

gender identity and/or expression, marital status, disability, genetic information, or veteran status, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

Continued success in equal employment opportunity depends not only on the commitment and involvement of those directly responsible for staffing the school but also on the dedication of all staff members. All staff are charged with making a personal commitment to practice and enforce the principles of this policy.

Additionally, a manager who has a personal or professional relationship with an applicant for employment must disclose this relationship in writing at the outset of the hiring process. In order to maintain objectivity in hiring decisions, it may be necessary for the manager to be excused from the interview process.

Dismissal

Pennwood will request staff planning to resign to notify their supervisor in writing at least two (2) working weeks prior to their last day. For those in a supervisory capacity, three (3) weeks of notice will be requested. The purpose for advance notice will be to provide for an orderly transition of the staff member's duties in a professional manner. Staff who are considered at risk for accessing confidential information during the notice period may have their duties adjusted during this time period or may be requested to work at home or may be excused from their work responsibilities. The right to work through the end of a notice period is at the school's discretion.

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) allows eligible staff members to extend health insurance for up to eighteen months (at their own expense) following termination of employment. Information about COBRA will be provided in the Benefits Guides and offered in accordance with applicable law.

In instances where a staff member voluntarily leaves the School's employ, Pennwood would like to discuss the reasons for leaving and any other impressions that staff member may have about the School. If the staff member decides to leave, they will be asked to grant the School the privilege of an exit interview. During the exit interview the staff member can express themself freely. Pennwood hopes to use feedback and insight from the exit interview to make any appropriate improvements. All information will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Human Resources Policies: Benefits

Employees will have access to a robust benefits package including health benefits (medical, dental, and vision coverage) and a retirement plan (403(b)). In addition, employees will have the opportunity to take advantage of a variety of voluntary benefits including short- and long-term disability, tuition assistance, a confidential employee assistance program, certain discount programs, term life and accident insurance, as well as other voluntary benefits. Per charter school law, Pennwood will offer the same health care benefits as those offered by the Central York School District, the district in which Pennwood's administrative office will be located.

Employees will also receive annual paid time off to include annual holidays, vacation, personal, and sick leave, as well as additional forms of leave such as bereavement leave and jury duty leave, as needed.

Employee Grievance Policy

The Pennwood Board will encourage open and direct lines of communication between employees at all levels of the organization. The Board respects the intelligence of its employees and their ability to speak

for themselves. It benefits everyone when employees feel free to bring questions, suggestions and concerns directly to their managers. Examples of issues that should be handled through this resolution process include: concerns about the application of school policies and procedures within the school to school staff, parents, and students; concerns about personnel decisions directly involving an individual or decisions affecting other individuals at the school; work conditions; questions about the competence and overall fitness of a colleague or a supervisor; and regulatory compliance. Employees will be directed to:

1. If the issue does not involve a violation of school policy or an ethical or regulatory requirement, meet with at least two levels of administration. An employee must, in good faith, make every attempt to resolve the issue with his/her immediate supervisor and, if that is not successful, then with his/her next level supervisor, which will generally be the CEO. Fear of retaliation, which is prohibited, is not a legitimate reason to skip this step. If the issue involves a violation of school policy or an ethical or regulatory requirement, then the employee should proceed directly to step two.
2. If the immediate supervisor or the next level supervisor cannot resolve the issue, or if the issue involves a violation of school policy or an ethical or regulatory requirement, put the issue in writing. It is important to describe the issue, the desired result, and the proposed solution to the issue. This step should occur as soon as possible and in no event more than twenty (20) business days after the occurrence of the problem.
3. If the issue relates to a personnel matter or work condition, contact Human Resources. After an employee fully describes the issue in writing, Human Resources will help them and their supervisor consider how policies, procedures, and practices relate for the issue. Often, the policies in the Employee Handbook will dictate a resolution to the issue. If the issue involves a school policy or an ethical or regulatory requirement, the employee can contact a member of the school administration. Human Resources will provide the name of the appropriate contact or they can contact the appropriate individual.
4. If the issue is not resolved by either Human Resources or School Administration, an employee can request that the matter be presented to the Board for final consideration. The contact information for the Board is located on the School's website. The Personnel Committee will be the main point of contact. Should the Personnel Committee not resolve the matter, the issue will be brought to the full Board.

Employee Discipline Policy

Employees will be expected to meet certain standards of work performance and conduct. These include, but are not limited to, those outlined in the Employee Handbook as well as in the employee's job description. Employees who do not meet the standards and expectations may be given the opportunity to improve performance and/or conduct through the disciplinary process. The nature of the discipline used, up to and including immediate termination of employment, will depend upon the conduct of the employee and the relevant circumstances. It is not a guarantee of continued employment when an employee is placed on an improvement plan as part of the disciplinary process. Employees are expected to meet their performance expectations daily.

The Board may, at any time, request that the CEO, in coordination with Pearson's Human Resources, promptly investigate and take action to address any complaints or concerns regarding the performance or conduct of any Teacher or staff member. The CEO will provide a prompt report to the Board on any and all actions taken in response to such a request.

Pennwood will ensure that it complies with investigatory regulations to confirm that all employees who have direct contact with children have not been the subject, been investigated, dismissed, or otherwise disciplined for misconduct with a student. Upon learning that an employee has been the subject of an aforementioned investigation, the School will take the steps as required by Pennsylvania law.

In accordance with the Educator Discipline Act (24 P.S. §§2070.1 *et seq)*, Pennwood will file within 15 days a mandatory report with the PDE for any educator who:

- Has been given notice of intent to dismiss or remove for cause;

- Resigned, retired, or otherwise separated from employment after any allegations of misconduct;

- Is alleged to have committed sexual abuse or exploitation involving a child or student or who is alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a child or student; or
- Who the chief school administrator has reasonable cause to suspect has caused physical injury to a child or student as a result of negligence or malice.

E. Identify the proposed faculty.

Proposed Faculty

Section V.3 (A) provides additional detail for planned Pennwood staffing. Pennwood has not hired any faculty yet. The Board will interview and hire the CEO in the spring prior to the approved school opening.

The Board will value the input of the CEO in making staff hiring decisions. The CEO will be an administrator requiring a Secondary or Elementary Principal Certification in Pennsylvania, which requires completion of a certification program at a college or university and five years successful teaching experience.

The selected CEO will also have management or administrative experience. A former principal who is technologically proficient with good communication skills is ideal. The CEO will build consensus and inspire teachers to teach, students to learn, and parents to engage in their child's learning while following the mission of the school. The CEO will be responsible for the overall school operation working with parents, students, support staff, and teachers who virtually facilitate the student instructional program.

Once the CEO is hired, he/she will work under the direction of the Board to hire the teachers and additional school staff. Teachers will be required to meet all requirements of Pennsylvania's charter school law. In accordance with Pennsylvania's Charter School law, 75 percent of professional staff members of a charter school must hold appropriate state certification for their assignment (24 P.S. § 17-1724-A). The remaining 25 percent may be uncertified in accordance with 24 P.S. § 17-1724-A(b). However, Pennwood will endeavor to have 100 percent state certified staff. Teachers at Pennwood will hold at least a bachelor's degree and will demonstrate competence in the core content areas in which they teach. Federal law further provides that charter school teachers must meet the certification requirements established in the state's public charter school law, which may differ from the requirements for full state certification. In Pennsylvania, charter school teachers of core content subjects at all grade levels, whether or not they hold state certification, must (1) hold at least a bachelor's degree and (2) demonstrate subject matter competence in each core content area and grade level at which they teach. To demonstrate subject matter competency, teachers can use a passing grade in the appropriate PRAXIS content area test in the subject area of their teaching assignment. With master's degrees and specialized training, counselors will be skilled at helping students address the non-academic barriers in school and life. Counselors will have appropriate Pennsylvania certification.

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

Criminal History Record for Staff with Direct Student Contact

The Charter School Law also requires an applicant to include a criminal history record and an official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse. 24 P.S. §17-1719-A (15), (16). Since Pennwood Cyber Charter School has not yet hired staff, it is not possible to provide criminal history records and child abuse clearances at the time of submitting this application. In compliance with Section 111 of the Public School Code, individuals required by law will, in addition to the FBI background check, submit their fingerprints to be run by the Pennsylvania State Police to make sure there are no adverse records in the State Police Central Repository.

In accordance with 24 P.S. Section 111, all applicants for employment at the School must undergo state and federal background checks. Background checks will be no more than one year old at the time of application. Administrators will make and keep a copy of the original background checks.

As required by state law, applicants for employment will be required to produce three documents verifying the checks that they have completed:

- Pennsylvania State Criminal History Record (Act 34) where the applicant will submit information online to be run through the PATCH system. The system will generate a report that is sent directly to the applicant for submission to Pennwood
- Child Abuse Report (Act 151) which requires the applicant to complete an application to be submitted to the Department of Public Welfare to investigate whether the applicant has been the subject of, or is currently the subject of, an investigation for child abuse, sexual abuse, or the like, or has ever been disciplined by any employer, public institution, or other authority for such an offense. The Department will in turn send a report back to the applicant, which is to be submitted to Pennwood;
- Federal (FBI) Criminal History Report (Act 114) whereas the applicant will submit their fingerprints to the State Police to be run through the FBI repository for criminal history of the applicant;

In addition, the applicant will be required to submit the following forms to the School:

- Arrest / Conviction and Certification Report (Act 24) or PDE-6004: this form that must be completed by the applicant affirming they have/have not been convicted of certain crimes listed on the document.
- Sexual Misconduct / Abuse Disclosure Release (Act 168): this release must be completed by the applicant for their current employer, any previous employers that were school entities, and any employer where the applicant was employed and held a position with interaction with children.

Failure to accurately report required information will subject the candidate to discipline up to, and including, denial of employment or termination if already hired, and may subject the candidate to civil and criminal penalties. Pennwood may use the information for the purpose of evaluating an applicant's fitness to be hired or for continued employment and may report the information as permitted by law.

Individuals may be employed for a single period, not to exceed 90 days, as a provisional employee if all of the following conditions are met:

- The applicant has applied for the three required clearances and the applicant has provided a copy of the completed forms to Pennwood

- Pennwood has no knowledge of information pertaining to the applicant that would disqualify him/her from employment.
- The applicant swears or affirms in writing that they are not disqualified from employment pursuant to the grounds for denying employment in § 6344 (c) of the Child Protective Services Law or has not been convicted of an offense of a similar nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States, or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of the Commonwealth.

The applicant is not permitted to work alone with children and must work in the immediate vicinity of a permanent employee.

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

Since Pennwood Cyber Charter School has not yet hired staff, there are no official clearance statements to attach at the time of submitting this application.

Official Clearance Statement regarding Child Injury or Abuse

Upon being offered employment, any candidate who has direct contact with students must obtain and submit to Pearson, as part of its contract with the School, a clearance statement for the preceding year from the Department of Public Welfare. The clearance letter is to state that the employee is not named as a perpetrator of an indicated/founded child abuse or neglect report or is named as the individual responsible for injury/abuse in an indicated/founded report. This document must be submitted prior to employment.

Clearances must be obtained every 36 months. Timelines for renewed clearances will be based upon the date of each individual clearance. Clearances are transferrable within the school and a person need not obtain a new clearance letter to change positions within the school.

Pennwood will maintain copies of the required information and require the individual to produce the original documents prior to employment or acceptance to serve in any such capacity, except provisional employees for limited periods. Individuals may be employed for a single period, not to exceed 90 days if all of the following conditions are met:

- The applicant has applied for the three required clearances and they provide a copy of the completed forms to Pennwood.
- Pennwood has no knowledge of information pertaining to the applicant that would disqualify him/her from employment.
- The applicant swears or affirms in writing that they are not disqualified from employment pursuant to the grounds for denying employment in § 6344 (c) of the Child Protective Services Law or has not been convicted of an offense of a similar nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States, or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of the Commonwealth.

The applicant is not permitted to work alone with children and must work in the immediate vicinity of a permanent employee.

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

Procedures for Hiring Certified, Highly Qualified Teachers and Staff

While Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) eliminated the highly qualified teach requirements in 2016, Pennwood Cyber Charter School will ensure the School complies with the PDE's Teacher Certification regulations.[60] "Pennsylvania's Charter School Law requires that at least 75 percent of a charter school's professional staff hold appropriate state certification. State law further specifies which professional staff must be certified and, therefore, may not be included in the calculation of the 25 percent exclusion to the certification requirement." However, as stated previously, Pennwood endeavors to have 100 percent state certified teachers.

During the interview and onboarding process, transcripts, certifications, and test scores will be submitted to the onboarding team for initial evaluation. These documents will be kept by onboarding until the employee is hired. Upon being hired, the documents will be uploaded into the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) for instant access by teachers and the human resources department.

The School will review all documentation to ensure that all employees have the necessary documentation and experience. If an employee has not submitted the necessary documentation, the Human Resources team will contact the employee to ensure that the documentation is produced.

V.4 Code of Conduct

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

A. Discuss any rules or guidelines governing student behavior.

Student Behavior Policies

Pennwood Cyber Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all its students, and conveys this commitment through its written policies in the form of the School Handbook, which all students must review as part of the enrollment process, and its collaboratively developed school culture.

Student Conduct Policies

The School will have a detailed School Handbook (a draft school handbook is provided in Appendix V) that will include a clear and fair set of roles and responsibilities for students, Learning Coaches, and School staff that complies with the students' due process rights and aligns with the School's mission. Parents/guardians will be provided with access to the handbook at the beginning of the enrollment process.

Appropriate conduct will be expected of all students. As a personalized, high-expectation cyber school, Pennwood anticipates being able to effectively manage student discipline issues. The expectations for student conduct will be explained in the handbook and will include steps to be followed in the event of a

---

[60] Source: https://www.education.pa.gov/Educators/Certification/Staffing%20Guidelines/Pages/CSPG24.aspx

policy violation. The School will follow formal due process procedures to manage the discipline of students. In addition, the cyber curriculum will allow the School to minimize academic interruptions caused by suspensions; students may be expected to work regardless of their disciplinary status.

Pennwood will regard academic honesty as key to its mission, and will expect all stakeholders to understand that cheating, plagiarizing, or other acts of academic dishonesty are directly counter to the principles of academic excellence and harm most those students who engage in such activities. By engaging in academic misconduct, students cheat themselves of the opportunity to fully develop their intellectual abilities. As part of the school start-up tasks, all students will be required to sign the Honor Code indicating their understanding of the expectations of academic honesty. It will be expected that students will adhere to the Honor Code throughout the school year, and that all schoolwork submitted to meet course or class requirements represents the original work of the student. The Honor Code will serve to reinforce students' commitment to academic excellence and integrity. Students and parents suspected of inappropriate academic behavior will be confronted immediately and subjected to standard disciplinary action as described in the handbook.

The Handbook will include practices the School will use to promote effective discipline, a list of offenses (such as bullying and sexual harassment) which may result in suspension or expulsion, an explanation of the rights of students with disabilities, and policies and procedure for due process. Pennwood will establish and adopt suspension and expulsion policies that will be distributed in the School Handbook. Pennwood's discipline, suspension, and expulsion policies will be in accordance with student's rights and with applicable law.

Reflected in the School Handbook will be a careful protection of the rights of disabled students through the fair application of due process and strict adherence to the IDEA, Chapter 504 of the ADA and Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code.

Pennwood will not discriminate in its discipline policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis that would be illegal under applicable state and/or federal laws (24 P.S. section 17-1723-A(b)(1).

There are special rules in Pennsylvania for excluding children with disabilities for disciplinary reasons as set forth in Chapter 711 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (which adopt by reference 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and 34 CFR §§ 300.530-300.536) as well as the Procedural Safeguards Notice available through PaTTAN.

Pennwood personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis, when determining whether a change of placement, made in accordance with the following requirements related to discipline, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a school code of student conduct.

To the extent that they also take such action for children without disabilities, School personnel may, for not more than 10 consecutive school days, remove a child with a disability (other than a child with an intellectual disability) who violates a code of student conduct from his/her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension. School personnel may also impose additional removals of the child of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement (see Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals for the definition) or exceed 15 cumulative school days in a school year. Once a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for a total of 10 school days in the same school year, the School must, during any subsequent days of removal in that school year, provide services to the extent required.

If the behavior that violated the student code of conduct was not a manifestation of the child's disability (see Manifestation determination) and the disciplinary change of placement would exceed 10 consecutive school days, School personnel may apply the disciplinary procedures to that child with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as it would to children without disabilities, except that the school must provide services to that child as described herein under Services. The child's IEP Team determines the interim alternative educational setting for such services. Under Pennsylvania special education regulations, a disciplinary exclusion of a student with a disability for more than 15 cumulative school days in a school year will be considered a pattern so as to be deemed a change in educational placement (explained under Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals). Pennwood will be required to issue a NOREP/Prior Written Notice to parents prior to a removal that constitutes a change in placement (removal for more than 10 consecutive days or 15 cumulative days).

The services that must be provided to a child with a disability who has been removed from the child's current placement may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting. Pennwood will only be required to provide services to a child with a disability who has been removed from his/her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who has been similarly removed. Students may have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and may be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the School.

A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement for more than 10 consecutive school days must continue to receive educational services, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not happen again.

After a child with a disability has been removed from his/her current placement for 10 school days during one school year, or if current removal is for 10 consecutive school days or less, and if the removal is not a change of placement (see definition herein), then School personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, will determine the extent to which services will be needed to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

If the removal is a change of placement (see definition herein), the child's IEP Team will determine the appropriate services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

Manifestation Determination

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct (except for a removal that does not constitute a change in educational placement i.e., is for 10 consecutive school days or less and not a change of placement), The School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the School) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- If the conduct in question was the direct result of Pennwood's failure to implement the child's IEP.

If School, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either of those conditions were met, the conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If Pennwood, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was the direct result of Pennwood's failure to implement the IEP, the School must take immediate action to remedy those deficiencies.

If School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:

- Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless Pennwood had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or
- If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Except as described herein, Pennwood must return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and Pennwood agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

Whether or not the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the child's IEP Team) for up to 45 school days, if the child:

- Carries a weapon (see the definitions herein) to school or has a weapon at School, on School premises, or at a School function under the jurisdiction of Pennwood;
- Knowingly has or uses illegal drugs (see the definitions herein), or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, (see the definitions herein), while at School, on School premises, or at a School function under the jurisdiction of Pennwood; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury (see the definitions herein) upon another person while at School, on School premises, or at a School function under the jurisdiction of the PDE or Pennwood Cyber

Definitions

Controlled substance means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202 (c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)). Illegal drug means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.

Serious bodily injury has the meaning given the term "serious bodily injury" under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.

Weapon has the meaning given the term "dangerous weapon" under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18, United States Code.

Notification

On the date it makes the decision to make a removal that is a change of placement of the child because of a violation of a code of student conduct, Pennwood must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents with a procedural safeguards notice.

Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals

A removal of a child with a disability from the child's current educational placement is a change of placement requiring a NOREP/prior written notice if:

- The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days; or
- The removal is for 15 cumulative school days total in any one school year;
- The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:

    o The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;

    o The child's behavior is substantially similar to the child's behavior in previous incidents that resulted in a series of removals;

- Of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another; and
- Whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement is determined on a case-by-case basis by Pennwood and, if challenged, is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

Determination of Setting

The IEP Team must determine the interim alternative educational setting for removals that are changes of placement, and removals under additional authority and special circumstances.

General

The parent of a child with a disability may file a due process complaint to request a due process hearing if they disagree with any decision regarding placement made under these discipline provisions; or the manifestation determination.

The School may file a due process complaint to request a due process hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

The hearing officer may:

- Return the child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed if the hearing officer determines that the removal was a violation of the requirements described under the heading Authority of School Personnel, or that the child's behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability; or
- Order a change of placement of the child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

These hearing procedures may be repeated, if Pennwood believes that returning the child to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

When the parent or Pennwood has filed a due process complaint related to disciplinary matters, the child must (unless the parent and the PDE or the School agree otherwise) remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer, or until the expiration of the time period of removal as provided for and described under the heading Authority of School Personnel, whichever occurs first.

Special Rules for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

The disciplinary removal of a child with intellectual disability attending Pennwood for any amount of time is considered a change in placement and requires a NOREP/prior written notice (if the disciplinary event does not involve drugs, weapons and/or serious bodily injury). A removal from School is not a

change in placement for a child who is identified with intellectual disability when the disciplinary event involves weapons, drugs, and/or serious bodily injury.

According to certain assurances the Commonwealth entered into related to the PARC consent decree, Pennwood may suspend on a limited basis a student with intellectual disability who presents a danger to himself or others upon application and approval by the Bureau of Special Education and only to the extent that a student with a disability other than intellectual disability could be suspended.

Protections for Children not yet Eligible for Special Education and Related Services

If a child has not been determined eligible for special education and related services and violates a code of student conduct, but Pennwood had knowledge before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred, that the child was a child with a disability, then the child may assert any of the protections described herein.

Basis of Knowledge for Disciplinary Matters

Pennwood must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if, before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent of the child expressed concern in writing that the child is in need of special education and related services to supervisory or administrative personnel, or a teacher of the child;
- The parent requested an evaluation related to eligibility for special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA; or
- The child's teacher, or other Pennwood personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the School's Director of Special Education or to other supervisory personnel of the Pennwood Cyber Charter School.

Pennwood would not be deemed to have such knowledge if:

- The child's parent has not allowed an evaluation of the child or refused special education services; or
- The child has been evaluated and determined to not be a child with a disability under Part B of the IDEA.

If prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, Pennwood does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures that are applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors.

However, if a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.

Until the evaluation is completed, the child will remain in the educational placement determined by School authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by Pennwood, and information provided by the parents, the School must provide special education and related services in accordance with Part B of the IDEA, including the disciplinary requirements.

Referral to and Action by Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities

The state and federal regulations do not:

- Prohibit an agency from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities; or

- Prevent State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.

Subsequent to a referral to law enforcement, an updated functional behavior assessment and positive behavior support plan are required.

If Pennwood reports a crime committed by a child with a disability, then the School must ensure that copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records are transmitted for consideration by the authorities to whom the agency reports the crime; and may transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent permitted by FERPA.

Student Safety

Pennwood Cyber Charter School is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all its students, and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations among members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the School community, whether by or toward any student, staff, Learning Coach, Caretaker, or other member of the school community, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Examples of such prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, stalking, bullying/cyber bullying, intimidating or abusive conduct, making threats, and hazing.

This prohibition includes aggressive behavior; physical, verbal, and psychological abuse; and violence within a dating relationship. These types of behavior are forms of intimidation and harassment and are strictly prohibited, regardless of whether the target of the prohibited behavior are members of a legally protected group, such as sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, marital status, religion, or disability.

School policies regarding these prohibited behaviors are documented in the School Handbook. The School Handbook also contains the Terms of Use policy, which includes expectations for using the EMS This policy applies to all school-related activities, including but not limited to cyber activities such as participation in LiveLesson sessions, clubs, activities, email messages, discussions, and message boards, as well as any in-person events. The School Handbook states that every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation believed to be prohibited behavior directed toward a student and/or staff member. All reports are investigated with appropriate disciplinary consequences as laid out in the school handbook.

Pennwood will provide a safe and supportive environment by keeping students safe from online predators and solicitors. The School is committed to following and implementing health and safety requirements applicable to cyber schools. Students should be able to learn in a safe and comfortable environment. Pennwood requires two courses focused on safety:

- Internet Safety **-** An Internet Safety Course for students and parents (and Learning Coaches if the Learning Coach is not a parent) is provided. The i-SAFE course provides information about the various threats, challenges, and safety protocols needed to work and learn in an online environment. It contains valuable information about practicing safe behaviors online. This course is also required training for all school staff. In addition, all computer technology issued to Pennwood students will contain filtering software.

- Student Safety: The concern about the emotional and physical well-being of students is essential, not only for legal and ethical reasons, but also for academic reasons. It is imperative that School staff recognize the signs of child abuse and follow preventative measures to ensure

student safety. As part of this course, School staff will complete required coursework on the identification and intervention of child abuse, mandatory reporting of child abuse, and child sexual abuse prevention.

- Suicide Prevention: Pennwood will take the potential threat of suicide by students seriously. While suicide rates among teens is at the highest level it has been since World War II, this can affect students from all age ranges. It is imperative that School staff recognize the signs that could lead to attempted suicide and follow preventative measures to ensure student safety. As part of this course, School staff will complete required coursework on the awareness, prevention, and postvention of youth suicide.

Operationally, Pennwood staff will follow outlined protocols for reaching disengaged students while considering student safety. Internal processes of teachers creating "Child Welfare," "Child Concern," "Student Escalation," and "Truancy" Issue Aware (a project management system) tickets allow the appropriate groups of staff and administrators to respond to the varying concerns a student presents.

Pennwood will work to develop partner relationships with local community police departments and school resource officers to ask that, if a student cannot be reached, these local authorities are contacted to conduct physical welfare checks on students.

All School staff must complete the trainings upon hire and complete refresher courses in accordance with state/federal laws. School staff and administrators have immediate access to trainings and guides through the EMS to stay familiar with procedures and to use as a reference. Completion of trainings is tracked to ensure all staff members have completed them in a timely manner.

School Counselors and other support staff offer continued guidance and resources on safety protocols for staff, students, and families throughout the school year. School staff members are asked to involve additional parties as appropriate to address concerns and to always keep student safety and well-being at the center of the conversation.

The Technical Support team will assist families with installing programs that enable automatic blocking of adult, phishing, and identity theft sites via DNS filtering. Technical Support can also assist families with modifying browser security settings that limit potential malicious activity and installing web protection software, such as K9 Web Protection (software may change during the contract).

School Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Pennwood is committed to ensuring the health and safety of students and staff. In accordance with the Safe Schools Act, the Board will develop and maintain in cooperation with local law enforcement, a comprehensive disaster response and emergency preparedness plan which includes protocols for responding to crisis situations, reporting and resolution of incidents that occur on school property, or at a school sponsored event. The plan will be reviewed and modified once staff have been identified and hired in order to properly address the needs of the School, the facility, its staff and the community. The Board and local law enforcement will enter into a memorandum of understanding at least once every two years. The steps that will be taken to review and modify the plan include the following:

- Form a School Safety Committee that includes: Board; school administration, community representatives; representatives of the local police and fire department; and parents.

- Conduct a behavioral threat assessment

- Review applicable state laws and regulations to ensure compliance.

- Develop plan for safety drills for emergency situations including offsite emergencies at school-sponsored events.

- Review safety plans from other municipalities for content and presentation ideas.

- Develop goals and timelines.

- Draft school safety plan.

- Circulate draft safety plan to the School Safety Committee including the Board, the school administration, and community partners for review.

- Finalize the School Safety Plan.

- Consult with local law enforcement for plan approval.

School safety will be the primary responsibility of the CEO and his/her designee. They will oversee the security systems of Pennwood as well as the behavior of the students and notification of incidents consistent with § 10.21. In addition, all staff members will be expected to report to administration any inappropriate behavior in the School environment. It is the primary responsibility of staff to create a climate of respect and educational focus. Students will also be expected to set a tone of respect, order, and purposefulness. Particular responsibility will fall to staff to model good and safe behavior and to correct or report to the School administration inappropriate or unsafe behavior or events.

Mandated Reporting

In accordance with 23 P.S. § 6311 et seq, all School employees will be mandated reporters and must report suspected abuse as follows:

When child abuse is suspected, the law requires the School employee to immediately make an oral report of suspected child abuse via the statewide toll-free telephone number ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 or an online written report.

If a School employee makes an oral report to ChildLine, the School employee must follow-up with a written report, which may be submitted electronically, within 48 hours.

A mandated reporter must personally make the report. Pennwood administration may assist the School employee in making the report (for example, be with School employee for support if the School employee is uncomfortable in the process) as long as they do not interfere in any way with the making of the report. Afterward, the School employee should inform administration about the report.

The School employee will not be required to investigate or be certain of the abuse, or even know the name of the person who is suspected of abusing a child. The responsibility will be to make a report when the School employee has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse. ChildLine will forward the report to the appropriate county child welfare agency, who will investigate the circumstances and may contact School employee for additional information or if there are additional questions.

Pennwood will require that all employees receive the mandated reporting training. Mandated reporters who hold a professional license or certification under the Department of State and mandated reports who work for an agency that is licensed, supervised, or registered with the Department of Human Services will be required to receive training.

Possession of Weapons

Possession of weapons in the School setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and will be

prohibited by law. A weapon will include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. A student will be considered in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student, in the student's locker, desk, backpack, or in the student's vehicle, and the weapon is under the student's control while the student is on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school-sponsored activity held away from the school, on any conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity, or while the student is on his/her way to or from school.

The School will prohibit students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any school buildings, onto School property, to any School-sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a School-sponsored activity or while the student is coming to or from School.

The Board will expel for a period of not less than one year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion will be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy. The CEO may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis (24 P.S. 13-1317.2).

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, Pennwood will take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

The CEO or designee will react promptly to information and knowledge concerning possession of a weapon. Such action will comply with state law and regulations and with the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials and the School's emergency preparedness plan (22 Pa Code Chapter 10 et seq).

The CEO or designee will immediately report incidents involving weapons on school property, at any School-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a School or School-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the School's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies (22 Pa Code Chapter 10 et seq).

The CEO or designee will notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving weapons as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The CEO or designee will inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the School property has been or may be notified of the incident. The CEO or designee will document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian (22 Pa Code Chapter 10 et seq).

In accordance with state law, the CEO will annually, by July 31, report all incidents involving possession of a weapon to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form (24 PS 13-1303-A).

The CEO will annually inform staff, students and parents/guardians about the Board policy prohibiting weapons and about their personal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the School community

Policies for Student Expulsion and Suspension

All students enrolled in Pennwood are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the rules for the School, and Caretakers and Learning Coaches are expected to cooperate with the School staff in helping students to maintain this conduct.

Student codes of conduct are set forth in the School Handbook. Students are also guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Discipline Measures

There are three levels of formal disciplinary measures utilized by the school: 1) Warning, 2) Suspension, and 3) Expulsion. Each level and its corresponding disciplinary actions are identified below.

1. Warning

Students that receive warnings from the School will have a conference (via phone or in person) with their Caretaker and the school administrator(s), and the incident will be formally documented in writing and will become part of the student's permanent record. The student will not have a disruption in schooling and will continue to have access to the EMS.

Warnings are issued when a student demonstrates a breach of expected conduct, but not as serious as those listed under the suspension and/or expulsion categories in this Supplement.

2. Suspension

When a student is suspended, they are temporarily removed from class (the EMS) or a School sponsored program or activity. The length of a suspension is determined by the School administrator (up to 10 days at a time). A suspension will be documented in writing and will become part of a student's permanent record.

During a period of suspension as defined by the CEO, a student's permission to log on to and/or use parts of the EMS is restricted. Student access to email, the message boards, online clubs/activities, or all of the EMS may be revoked. In such cases where the student's access is completely revoked, the Learning Coach is responsible for logging on to the EMS and obtaining the student's assignments, responding to email, and recording assessment responses for the student. The student should continue with their schoolwork during a suspension.

Violations that may lead to suspension include, but are not limited to, the following breaches of conduct:

• Cheating on tests or daily work: A student who knowingly participates in copying, using another's work, and representing it as their own (for example, students transmitting their work electronically for another student's use), or who provides other students with test answers, answer keys, or otherwise uses unauthorized materials in an assignment or assessment situation.
• Plagiarism: A student's use of another person's words, products, or ideas without proper acknowledgement of the original work with the intention of passing it off as their own. Plagiarism may occur deliberately (with the intention to deceive) or accidentally (due to poor referencing). It includes copying material from a book, copying-and-pasting information from the Internet, and getting family or friends to help with coursework.

- Abusive conduct: A student who uses abusive language or engages in abusive conduct in the presence of others either in person or electronically/virtually.
- Bullying: A student that repeatedly engages in negative actions against another student in an attempt to exercise control over him/her.
- Intimidation: A student who engages in behavior intentionally meant to cause another person to fear harm or injury, be frightened into submission or compliance, or to feel a sense of inferiority.
- Harassment: A student who demonstrates verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religious beliefs, ethnic background, or disability that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the School's programs that: 1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating or hostile environment, 2) unreasonably interferes with an individual's educational performance, or 3) otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.
- Vandalism: A student who intentionally damages or destroys School property or records (physical or electronic). In these instances, the School reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency(ies).
- Theft and robbery: A student who takes money or other property (physical or electronic) with the intent to deprive another person or the School of that property. The threat or the use of force or violence is considered a serious breach of conduct. In these instances, the School reserves the right to contact the proper law enforcement agency.
- Sexual harassment: A student who subjects another to any unwelcome sexual advances including verbal harassment, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or suggestions, requests, or demands for sexual favors.
- Violence within a dating relationship: a student who attempts to maintain power and/or control over a dating partner through violence, threats of violence, and/or physical, emotional, and/or mental abuse.
- Violation of acceptable use policy: Students who violate the acceptable use policy in one form or another are open to disciplinary action including suspension. This would include signing on as parents.
- Repeated violation of any disciplinary issues.

3. Expulsion

When a student is expelled, they are separated from the school for a period longer than ten days, or permanently, for disciplinary reasons. An expulsion will be documented in writing and will become part of a student's permanent record.

Violations that may lead to expulsion include, but are not limited to, any behavior that indicates that a student is a serious threat to the safety of others: possession of firearms, dangerous weapons, bombs, or explosives, criminal behavior, arson, under the influence of or possession of, or sale of controlled substances or paraphernalia. Suspensions or expulsions for children designated as exceptional follow all appropriate state and federal policies, regulations, and laws.

For those students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the disciplinary procedures required by the IDEA will be followed. In the event a student has disabilities under both Section 504 and the IDEA, both policies shall be followed in determining appropriate disciplinary actions. The student will continue to receive FAPE.

Policies for Student Expulsion and Suspension for Students with Disabilities

Please refer to the previous description of discipline for students with disabilities. If a student with a disability violates a code of conduct, they will be disciplined according to the discipline measures described above for up to 10 days. Upon subsequent violations that result in suspensions that exceed 10 total days or 15 cumulative days in a school year, the School will determine if the behavior manifested from the student's disability. If Pennwood determines that the violation is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the School will apply the discipline procedures to the student in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities. However, if it is determined that the violation manifested from the student's disability, the School will conduct a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior plan to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

Due Process for Students (22 Pa. Code Section 12-.6-12.8)

The following actions will be conducted by the School, per each of the disciplinary measures as outlined below:

Suspension (no more than 10 days)

In instances of suspension exceeding three (3) days, the student and parent/guardian shall be offered the option of an informal hearing. This hearing will be convened with the student, Caretaker, CEO and other staff members as appropriate. The CEO will inform the student and Caretaker of the allegations and an explanation of the evidence that supports the allegations. The student will be provided with an opportunity to present their version of the occurrence. If the CEO determines that the incident(s) justifies suspension, written notice will be provided to the student and their Caretaker. The student will be provided all due process as required by law.

Any notice provided for suspension shall include (1) date, time and location of hearing; (2) description of the incident(s) that is the subject of the hearing provided to both the parents, Caretaker, and student; (3) the student's right to question any witnesses (4) the student's right to speak on their behalf and/or produce witnesses on their behalf (5) the informal hearing shall be held within five days of the suspension.

Expulsion

If the school determines that a student's conduct may warrant expulsion, the CEO will provide at least three (3) days written notice via certified mail to the Caretaker of the student of their determination and the student's right to a formal hearing before the governing board, an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the governing board. The notice shall include (1) the date, time, and place of the formal hearing (2) A copy of the expulsion policy (3) the student's right to be represented by counsel (at the expense of the parent/guardian) and (4) the hearing procedures, including the ability to reschedule the hearing for good cause.

The following are required for a formal hearing:

- Will be held privately unless the student requests a public hearing.
- The student shall have the right to be presented with witnesses against the student, including their statements or affidavits.
- The student will have the opportunity to testify to their version of the incident(s), call their own witnesses, and cross-examine witnesses

- A written or audio record will be kept of the hearing.
- The hearing will occur within fifteen (15) school days of the notification of charges. An extension may be granted if all parties agree, in circumstances the parties are awaiting results of laboratory reports or evaluations, or the delay is in the best interests of the victim (recovering from serious bodily injury).

A majority vote is required to expel the student. After the hearing, the CEO will make a recommendation for or against expulsion to the Board. Once the Board rules on the expulsion, the CEO and/or the Board will provide notification to the student and Caretaker of the Board's decision and discipline determination, including a notice of the right to appeal.

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

Mandatory Attendance Plan

Students must meet all regulatory requirements for attending public school in the state. Pennwood will require students to attend school for 195 days and complete a required number of hours of instruction per year. In order to make the state's required hours per year of instruction manageable, families are encouraged to have students complete the hours of schooling each week listed in the table below. All attendance requirements will be documented by both Board policy as well as in the School Handbook. The School's documents explaining attendance requirements will emphasize the value and importance of school attendance without over-reliance on punitive measures for non-attendance.

Grade(s)	Recommended Hours per Week	Required Hours per Year
K-5	25 hours	975
6-12	30 hours	1,170

Since Pennwood will offer a three-week interim term, the instructional hours per year exceed those required by the State's minimums.

Pennwood will require that students complete 21 credits and all required courses to graduate. This can be met if the student earns 6 credits during each academic year for all four years (three credits during the fall and three credits during the spring semester).

It should be noted that the attendance and hours of instruction requirements will be measured on a fiscal school year (July 1 through June 30) basis. The school's proposed first day of class is August 14, 2023.

Hours of schooling per day and/or week will be accumulated by completing lessons, assessments, portfolio items, labs, attending direct instruction sessions, attending educational field trips, participating in state mandated assessments, and by participating in other educational activities.

Failure to attend mandated LiveLesson sessions, state testing, or respond to emails and phone call messages from teachers may be counted against documented attendance hours.

Although there is more flexibility in a cyber program than in a traditional school with regard to when instruction occurs, students and Learning Coaches should be aware that the school calendar reflects the days on which teachers will be available to students.

Learning Coach Responsibilities

- Record Hours of Schooling – For each instructional day, Learning Coaches will enter a number between 0 and 9 in the EMS to indicate the number of hours of schooling that occurred. Pennwood will ensure students meet the daily and weekly totals to ensure compliance with state regulations. Learning Coaches may also ask for assistance from the School to enter attendance records if they are unable to access a computer on a given day.
- Alert School of Excused Student Absences – Learning Coaches cannot enter "E" (for excused absence) in the attendance code field in EMS. If a student is absent, the Learning Coach must send information to the school about the absence, and the School determines if the absence can be classified as excused, per the guidelines listed in the school handbook and applicable state law.
- Complete Defined School Year – Regardless of the number of hours of schooling a student may complete prior to the last day of the school year, students will be required to meet the daily and weekly required instructional hours up to and including the last day of the school year.

School Responsibilities

- Review Attendance Records – Teachers will monitor and review attendance records on a weekly basis. They will remind Learning Coaches to enter hours of schooling for all days of the week.
- Monitor Attendance Issues – The school's Manager of Engagement and their team of student engagement specialists will monitor student attendance. They will contact families with low attendance rates and work to help them stay in compliance. Student Engagement Specialists will also identify and record excused absences and can alter Learning Coaches' attendance records with proper documentation, if necessary. The goal of the Engagement team is to keep students on track, working, and progressing in their coursework. The Student Engagement Specialists will work with teachers, parents, and students to make sure that each student has a strong and positive relationships with Pennwood staff and are actively engaged in the School.
- Maintain the Integrity of the Attendance Data – After the weekly records are reviewed by the teacher, the School will lock the system to prohibit further editing. Any requests for adjustments to the previously verified records must be submitted in writing to the School for review, approval, and adjustment.
- Official Attendance Record – The attendance system in the EMS is the record of Learning Coach documented attendance. It is, however, only one of many sources used to determine if a student is meeting the required minimum instructional hours. In certain cases, where it has been determined that a student has not completed enough work or that certain other program requirement have not been fulfilled, the Manager of Engagement will invalidate the Learning Coach record resulting in sanctions up to and including withdrawal. Parents and students would be notified prior to changes being made to attendance.

Attendance Status and Escalation Systems

Enrolled students are always in one of four escalation statuses:

1. On-Track

2. Approaching Alarm

3. Alarm

4. Exempt (rare)

Escalation status is based on several criteria, as outlined in the School Handbook: General Portion, and is a combination of measures that indicate if a student is demonstrating adequate participation and therefore attendance in the program. This not only includes the actual attendance, but also lesson and assignment completion rates, and amount of communication with the teacher. Therefore, if a student's work completion rates are not on track or if they fail to communicate on a regular basis with the teacher, they will be placed into an escalated (Approaching Alarm or Alarm) status. It is important to recognize that just marking proper attendance will not keep a student's escalation status On-Track.

Truancy

To maximize student learning, regular attendance is imperative. The cyber program offers a great deal of flexibility surrounding how many hours students spend each day on schoolwork and on what days of the week they complete schoolwork. Due to this flexibility, Pennwood will have zero tolerance for truancy. Caretakers are held legally responsible for ensuring that their students are fully participating in School, even if they have designated another individual as their student's Learning Coach. The information below is intended to help Caretakers understand how to avoid having their student be considered truant, and to understand the consequences of truancy. To avoid truancy, the Caretaker must ensure that the following activities are taking place:

- The student completes assigned lessons and assessments weekly.
- The student is available for regularly scheduled telephone calls with teachers.
- The student attends any assigned mandatory LiveLesson sessions.
- The student can demonstrate that they are doing their own schoolwork.
- The student attends mandatory state testing.
- The Caretaker or Learning Coach has communicated with the homeroom teacher in advance if they need to deviate from the regular school calendar (for example, switching a vacation and school day).

The final decision about whether an absence is considered excused or unexcused will be made by the Manager of Engagement, Principal or CEO. Please note that three unexcused absences is considered not in compliance with the law.

Engagement Procedures

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will work closely with families in the event a student has unexcused absences from school. Our goal is to work collaboratively with families to prevent truancy and improve student attendance and achievement. The process is outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is consistent with compulsory attendance laws of the state of Pennsylvania.

If a student is not adequately engaging in the online program or has accumulated more than three (3) unlawful absences, the school is required to notify the Caretaker (parent or legal guardian) in writing and work with the Caretaker (and/or Learning Coach if the Learning Coach is a separate individual and the Caretaker chooses to include them) to create a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). If the student continues not to engage in the program, Pennwood Cyber Charter School is required to take further actions, up to and including, legal proceedings. In this application, the parent/legal guardian is sometimes referred to as the Caretaker. Often the Caretaker is the same person who functions as the Learning Coach, but in some situations these roles may be held by two different people. Each student will have a Learning Coach, typically a parent, who is encouraged to work in-person with the student. If a

Definition of "Missing a Day of School"

Missing a "day" of school is defined as "missing 1% of overall lesson completion in a week." Missing 1% of overall lesson completion in a week may be considered a day of unexcused absence if the Learning Coach or Caretaker does not provide acceptable documentation to the school for those missed hours to be considered excused.

V.5 Timetable

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

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

Detailed Timetable for Opening Pennwood Cyber Charter School

TASKS	Jun. 2022	July 2022	Aug. 2022	Sep. 2022	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023	May 2023	Jun. 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023
APPLICATION															
Submit charter application					x										
PDE evaluates application					x	x	x								
GOVERNANCE															
Develop and adopt policies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Review and Approve Employee and Student handbooks				X					x						
Conduct non-profit governance training			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Hold Regular Meetings			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
LEGAL															
Secure and engage Board Counsel		x	x												
Draft contract with the ESP		x	x	x											
File non-profit Articles of Incorporation			x												
Adopt Organizational Resolutions			x												
Review and execute Charter								x	x						
Secure insurance		x	x					x	x	x					
PERSONNEL															
Determine payroll and benefits compliance		x	x	x	x	x	x	x							
Establish staffing model	x	x	x												

TASKS	Jun. 2022	July 2022	Aug. 2022	Sep. 2022	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023	May 2023	Jun. 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023
Determine certification and background check requirements	x	x	x												
Approve employee handbook and employment policies	x	x	x					x	x	x	x				
Recruit CEO candidates									x	x					
Review CEO candidates								x	x	x					
Select CEO										x	x				
Train CEO											x	x	x	x	x
Recruit remaining staff										x	x	x	x	x	x
Train staff														x	x
FACILITY															
Identify/tour sites				x	x	x	x								
Select preliminary Sites/RFPs					x	x	x	x	x	x					
Procure letter of intent to lease with potential landlords							x	x	x						
Renovate & build-out									x	x	x	x			
Secure inspections/Certificate of Occupancy											x	x	x	x	x
Move-In for school start														x	x
CURRICULUM															
Verify state course codes					x										x
Fine-tune alignments to state standards				X	x							x			
Determine course limits and/or restrictions				X											
Complete any necessary curriculum enhancements						x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
STUDENT RECRUITMENT															
Determine marketing budget		x	x	x											
Create website			X												
Launch website			X												
Develop and implement outreach plan (grassroots, PR, advertising, online	X	X	X	X	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

TASKS	Jun. 2022	July 2022	Aug. 2022	Sep. 2022	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023	May 2023	Jun. 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023
marketing, collateral, direct mail, etc.)															
Develop and implement virtual info session materials		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Host parent/student information sessions or provide on demand recordings		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student application period								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Enrollment period									X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hold Student/parent orientation											X	X	X	X	X
FINANCE/BUSINESS/DATA REPORTING															
Finalize and approve school budget			X	X	X										
Establish bank account									X						
Determine eligibility and application process for Title and or IDEA funding											X	X	X	X	X
Establish external data reporting protocols/processes								X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Secure independent auditor											X	X	X	X	X
Validate State Legal Entity created and authorized and required regulatory reporting								X							
STUDENT SERVICES															
Determine requirements for Special Education and ELL		X	X	X											
Research IEP enrollment age specifications		X	X	X											
Confirm minimum graduation requirements (credits and course requirements)		X	X	X											

TASKS	Jun. 2022	July 2022	Aug. 2022	Sep. 2022	Oct. 2022	Nov. 2022	Dec. 2022	Jan. 2023	Feb. 2023	Mar. 2023	Apr. 2023	May 2023	Jun. 2023	July 2023	Aug. 2023
Work with CEO to create progression plan(s)										x	X				
TECHNOLOGY															
Determine technology offering rules	x	x	x	x											
Develop a Technology Plan, determine the approval process								x	x	x					
Install technology at site; test technology prior to school opening												x	x	x	x
RESEARCH and ASSESSMENT															
Determine state test requirements and dates	x	x	x				x	x							
Determine the proficiency levels for the state assessment	x	x	x				x	x							
Create a state testing plan	x	x	x				x	x		x	x	x	x	x	

V.6 Safety

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

> *Inspection by a local building inspector.*
> *Inspection by a local fire department.*
> *Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school.*
> *Compliance with all other federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations.*
> *Application for certificates, licenses, etc. are part of the planning process.*

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

Safety of School Building

The facilities will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety laws, regulations, and requirements. Pennwood Cyber Charter School will follow applicable city planning review procedures. Pennwood, in consultation with the landlord and ESP, will ensure the property is inspected by a local building inspector and the local fire department.

Although not anticipated, if necessary, Pennwood will request approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the School. Page 18 of the 2022 Cyber Charter School Application released by the PDE, required that applicants "submit written documentation of intent to comply with all applicable safety requirements, including the following: Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school." Therefore, we are including this language to meet the requirement to show our written intent to comply.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will apply for certificates, licenses, and so forth as part of the planning process.

Compliance with Health and Safety Laws

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will comply with or will be capable of modification to bring the School into compliance with all local building, zoning, and health and safety requirements. Building codes will be met or exceeded and prior to occupancy, the local building authority's certification of having met such codes will be obtained prior to occupancy.

Certificates of Occupancy

Since students will be present in the School administrative office only on a drop-in basis, and will not gather there for instructional activities, no special zoning will be required beyond standard commercial use. All necessary certificates and occupancy permits must be issued and in effect prior to the opening of the School. Preliminary clearances on all these requirements will be obtained prior to a lease being executed.

Pennwood will ensure the facility has a certificate of occupancy, air-conditioning, heating, illuminated fluorescent lights, male and female bathrooms, parking, is handicapped accessible, and is fully equipped with sprinklers and other fire safety equipment. If Pennwood contemplates any regional learning center facilities to accommodate testing, related services, etc. in the future, such facilities will be appropriately zoned.

V.7 School Health Services

A. Describe your plan for providing school health services as required under Article XIV of the Public School Code.

Plan for Providing School Health Services

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will hire one Certified School Nurse (CSN) upon charter agreement and will maintain a ratio of 1 CSN for every 1,500 students enrolled. Upon approval of the charter, the board will contract with school physicians and dentists as necessary throughout the Commonwealth to meet the requirements of Article XIV: School Health Services of the Public School Code and the required screenings detailed below.

SERVICE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Notes
School Nurse Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Maintenance of Health Record	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Screening														Notes
Immunization Assessment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Medical Examination	*	*					X					X		*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade
Dental Examination	*	*		X				X						*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade
Growth Screen	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Hearing Screen	X	X	X	X				X				X		
Scoliosis Screen							X	X						6th grade physical may be used in lieu of 6th grade screen
Tuberculin Test	*	*								X				*Required on original entry- K or 1st grade. Unless approved to discontinue
Vision Screen-Far Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Vision Screen-Near Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Vision Screen-Convex Lens Test (Plus Lens)		X												1st grade students meeting criteria & new students (any grade) not previously screened
Vision Screen-Color Vision Test		*	*											*1st or 2nd grade & new students (any grade) not previously screened
Vision Screen- Stereo/Depth Perception Test		*	*											*1st or 2nd grade & new students (any grade) not previously screened

Parents and students will receive information about the Student Assistance Program in the School Handbook outlining assistance and programs the School offers to students for drug, alcohol, and/or mental health issues.

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

Delivery of School Nursing Services

Pennwood will hire a school nurse in year one of the charter and will also contract with local health service providers throughout Pennsylvania to meet the requirements of Article XIV: School Health Services of the Public School Code.

The health services may include:

- A vision test
- A hearing test
- A measurement of height and weight which shall use the measurement to compute a child's weight-for-height ratio
- Tests for tuberculosis under medical supervision

- Such other tests as the Advisory Health Board may deem advisable to protect the health of the child. Vision tests will be given at least annually and other tests at intervals established by the Advisory Health Board.

Pennwood Cyber Charter School will maintain a comprehensive health record which will include the results of the tests, measurements, and regularly scheduled examinations and special examinations and which will be protected for confidentiality. The student's health record will also include medical questionnaires completed by the student's parent or guardian.