



## CHARTERED PUBLIC SCHOOL

*A nation of well-informed men who have been taught to know and prize the rights which God has given them cannot be enslaved. It is in the region of ignorance that Tyranny begins.*

*Benjamin Franklin*

# Charter School Application

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**Submitted By:** The Founders Academy Foundation  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **(A) Educational Mission**

#### **Vision**

The Founders Academy (TFA) prepares wise, principled leaders by offering a classical education and providing a wide array of opportunities to lead.

#### **Mission**

The Founders Academy is a public chartered school encompassing grades 6 -12 that is free and open to all New Hampshire students. The Academy develops leaders who understand and apply the lessons of the past, demonstrate exceptional character and lead by example. The Academy recognizes the importance of balance in the development of the whole person, and respects each student's journey.

Principled leadership is fostered by means of a curriculum of classical studies that includes analyzing the lives of great men and women of history, mining the rich classical ideals of the Western tradition, and tracing the evolution of the precious and costly idea of liberty.

#### **Basic Features of The Founders Academy**

1. A Classical Education depends on a three-part process of training the mind. The early years of school are spent in absorbing facts. In the middle grades, students learn to think through arguments. In the high school years, they learn to express themselves. This classical pattern is called the Trivium. Through the study of Western Culture, a classical education allows students to join "The Great Conversation" about the values,

achievements and experiences of Western man in the development of the principles and practice of Liberty. (*Partially taken from Susan Wise Bauer, The Well-Trained Mind*)

2. The theme of Leadership will be explored across the curriculum and through other aspects of school life, such as school governance, community projects, and the senior project. Students will study the lives of great leaders, will have opportunities to practice leadership, and to review their experiences. (See “Leadership Strand”)
3. A focus on western values will be a central feature of the curriculum.
4. Student Advisory and Morning Meetings will be held which will offer opportunities for students to discuss their academic progress, share individual or school issues and to offer suggestions and support for improvement in the social and academic life of the school.
5. Students and faculty will meet twice a week for a fifteen-minute assembly. Students will make presentations, listen to visiting lecturers, and debate issues. Occasionally the time will be extended for an academic or extra-curricular program.
6. Wherever possible, the curriculum will consist of the use of primary texts and documents. Textbooks will be used sparingly.
7. A focus will be given to the study of the history and development of Liberty, and the great men and women who made this possible.
8. The school is committed to the healthy development of the whole person: academic, social, physical, ethical, emotional, and creative. There will be a challenging college-preparatory program, but not at the expense of other aspects of a young life.

9. Students will pursue a program of required courses and electives. To whatever extent possible, students will pursue their own interests within the curriculum and have the opportunity for virtual or college courses, to supplement the offered curriculum.
10. Instruction will be a mixture of traditional methods of lecture and Socratic exchange, opportunities for cooperative and project-based learning will be included, where appropriate. (See “Instructional Approach” Paideia Active Learning)
11. Writing and speaking will be taught across the curriculum.
12. Student learning will be measured by the mastery of standards, not seat time.
13. TFA will utilize a diverse selection of learning environments, including local courthouses, businesses, research institutes, and college campuses. “School” and “schooling” will not be based on place.
14. Students will learn to recognize and appreciate their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of others.

## **(B) Governance, Organizational Structure, and Plan**

### **Ability to Submit Application**

In accordance with provisions to RSA 194-B:3, V, The Founders Academy Charter School (TFA) application to establish a public charter school has been submitted by The Founders Academy Foundation, a non-profit organization. .

### **The Founding Board**

The Founders Academy Foundation, a group of experienced charter school developers, educators, administrators, Board of Directors, and partners, will oversee development of the school. The Founders Academy Foundation is a New Hampshire registered not-for-profit

organization comprised of six founding members, and established to create and sustain a charter school in New Hampshire. The Founding Board of Directors and Management Team have extensive experience with startup organizations, education (including school design, curriculum development, instructional strategies, assessment, and staff development), business, law, facilities development, finance, technology, strategic planning, governmental relations, fundraising, public relations, organizational development, student leadership development, and community development.

The immediate work of the Foundation is to prepare the charter school application for approval, serve as an ambassador-organization in promoting the School, and select the first Board of Trustees of The Founders Academy Charter School. The Founders Academy's mission, program, and team are designed to implement the legislative goals of the NH Charter Schools Act, including improving pupil learning abilities, creating new professional opportunities for teachers, and providing expanded public school choice for parents and students.

#### **Officers of the Board of The Founders Academy**

Initial officers shall include: chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer of TFA. Officers of the board shall be elected by majority vote of the board at the annual organizational meeting to be held in June of each year and shall serve until the next annual organizational meeting. If a replacement officer is needed, the replacement officer serves out the unexpired term of the departing officer.

## **Board of Trustees**

In accordance with RSA 194-B:5, The Founders Academy will be governed by up to nine members of Board of Trustees. The Board will have general supervisory control and authority over operations of the charter school.

Trustee selection will be based on personal and professional background and a commitment to the school's mission, support, and sustainability. Trustees shall represent a diversity of stakeholders and contributors:

- Two (2) representing the business community (external members)
- One (1) representing the college and school community (external member)
- Three (3) founders or major contributors to the school
- Three (3) parents (parent or parent-member representative from the parent steering committee)

The Board of Trustees shall maintain no more than a nine (9) member board, and in addition can establish *ex officio* board members and/or advisors who will be non-voting. The board is not required to maintain nine (9) members but once the school officially opens for business shall strive to maintain at all time a board of at least five (5) board members. The board shall attempt to maintain a 50/50 balance of parents and founders vs. external board members. Founding Board Members terms do not expire. Founding Board Members decide when to resign. If any Founding Board Member is not supporting the original mission and vision for TFA they may be removed from the board by a quorum majority vote. Any Board Member may be removed by a majority vote if they are involved in activities considered illegal or damaging to the reputation of TFA.

## **Committees**

The Board of Trustees will develop subcommittees as it deems necessary to pursue specific topics and report back to the board for action. On occasion, the Board may specifically vote to delegate a subcommittee to act. Initial subcommittees will include: start-up, board recruitment, strategic planning & finance, curriculum development, personnel, outreach, and others as needed. The Board of Trustees may authorize one or more of its members to serve on a board committee. The Board Chair shall hold the authority for selecting and naming the Committee Chair person. No opinion, decision, or commitment on behalf of the Board however, can be made by a Board representative or subcommittee without Board authorization.

Policies for School Board Governance and Operations will be developed once State approval for The Founders Academy is final. The Board will endorse for use in this district the policy development, codification, and dissemination system of the New Hampshire School Boards Association.

### **(C) Methods by which trustees and their terms are determined**

Terms of trustees will be staggered, which will enable the board to profit from experienced, veteran board members while also welcoming fresh perspectives new members may offer. First-year trustees will be appointed for two, or three year terms to establish initial staggered terms and governance stability. The Board may appoint a trustee to fill a vacancy if vacated but that Board member will only be allowed to serve until the original term expires. Board members may serve consecutive terms if so voted by a Board majority.

The Board of Trustees, will select and appoint future trustees, define future board terms, and vote on policies for board governance and filling vacancies. For the purpose of conducting

business, the Board will follow the New Hampshire Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A. For purposes of lawful meetings, a quorum is defined as a majority of trustees physically present or participating through video or voice conferencing systems. Records and meeting minutes will be kept in accordance with statutory guidelines.

The Board of Trustees will begin governance within three months after receiving charter authorization. The Board's first task will be to create a selection process for the school Director. The school Director will be a non-voting member of the Board.

### **Start-up Committee**

During the school's first year of planning and design, a start-up committee shall work on all areas of charter school development and readiness. This team will be comprised of founders and advisors. Their duties will include but are not limited to:

- Forming initial subcommittees
- Securing general and board liability insurance
- Securing an appropriate site for the school
- Developing applications and marketing materials
- Developing job descriptions and the hiring process
- Publicizing staff, administration, and faculty positions
- Obtaining health, fire, and safety code approvals for facility
- Purchasing supplies and materials for school setup

### **Board of Advisors**

The governing Board of Trustees shall be augmented by a Board of Advisors. The Board of Advisors is an advisory group of non-voting members, representing areas such as, business

industries, academia, law and ethics, research, international relations, student and faculty, legislators, and other topics of interest to the board.

**D. Potential Location of Facility (if applicable)**

TFA plans to find a suitable facility in Londonderry along the I-93 corridor with a target location at the Exit 4 or Exit 5 area. To find a suitable facility TFA has secured a qualified commercial real-estate adviser and will work with local resources to secure the right building location. Accessibility and a suitable facility for running a school operation will be an important part of the consideration for a suitable location.

**E. Maximum number, grade or age levels, and, as applicable, other information about pupils to be served.**

TFA seeks to open in September 2013 with a first year enrollment of up to 100 students in grades 6 and 7 adding approximately 100 students each year thereafter. TFA will build to a maximum total enrollment of up to 650 students in grades 6-12 at full capacity. By year three, we expect to introduce our first high-school upper classrooms, which will grow to serve students in grades 9-12. TFA's plan is to maintain a 600 to 650 student population once the school fills to capacity.

Though TFA plans to open enrollment for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades only, if needed, TFA shall open enrollment across all grades. Once the school fills to capacity, admission will be determined by available space, and therefore, for most students, the entry point will be in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The Director will have discretion in choosing to extend the opportunity for older students' applications, based on available space. Should the number of potential students exceed capacity, enrollment will be determined by a blind lottery.

## **Students Drawn from Many Communities**

TFA will be a welcoming community with a diverse student body. With no other public charter school focusing on leadership and classic education in the State, only a small percentage of New Hampshire families have the resources necessary to send their children to a private school that focuses on such programs. We see The Founders Academy as an option for *all* families interested in a classical education with a strong focus on leadership and classic literature. We are committed to bringing this opportunity to the public.

The initial space requirements are estimated to be 6-8 classrooms with approximately 8,000-12,000 square feet. Initially one large multipurpose room may be utilized as a cafeteria, music/art room and meetings if needed. Several offices will also be required for administrative staff. We anticipate needing a total of 65,000-85,000 square feet at full capacity.

## **(F) Curriculum that meets or exceeds stated standards in the subject areas offered**

### **Distinguishing Curriculum Features**

Based upon our current knowledge of best educational practice, the design of Founders Academy curriculum will address three leading statements for ensuring a learner-centered approach to education:

1. Our students will learn to reason and be independent thinkers as they progress through school.
2. Students will understand and demonstrate retention of subject matter considered essential for acquiring advanced knowledge and skills.
3. Students growth in academic and leadership ability is anchored in learning that builds strong ethical character and contributes to leading a healthy, productive life.

## **Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessment**

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will serve as the framework to develop a curriculum. The curriculum will ensure that all students will achieve or exceed competency expectations for grade levels and required courses as they progress toward college and career readiness. The Academy's approach to literacy across the curriculum will reflect the NHDOE's Criteria for Curriculum Materials in ELA & Literacy, Grades 4-12, with special regard to its focus on close reading of "the text itself" at increasing levels of complexity across a balance of literary and informational materials.

## **DISTINGUISHING CURRICULUM FEATURES**

### **Classical Periods as Domains for Shaping a Coherent Curriculum**

Students will learn the knowledge and skills specified by the Common Core State Standards and Grade Level Expectations. Coursework will include the arts and sciences organized for coherence around identified domains of historical development beginning with ancient civilizations and ending with modern times. For example, Algebra will be taught both as a course where students learn a process of mathematical thinking to solve relevant problems, and, in connection with other coursework or interdisciplinary projects, where students learn how mathematics in successive periods of time was constructed.

The Founders Academy curriculum will be comprised of individual courses blocked into three divisions:

- **Humanities & Arts:** History, English (including heavy emphasis on *classic literature*), Foreign language, Arts electives, and other potential electives (e.g. World religions);

- **Science & Technology:** Algebra I and II, Geometry, Advanced mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics;
- **Economics & Finance:** Economics, Finance, Business, Ethics and Law.

Faculty from the three divisions will collaborate to develop linkages and opportunities for cross-disciplinary and cross-grade-level student projects within the individual courses - and also separate from the individual courses (see the "**Leadership Strand**" below). These linkages and projects will draw upon a chronological sequence of domains such as the following:

- Grade 9: Sustaining ideas of Ancient Civilizations
- Grade 10: European awakening from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment
- Grade 11: The Great American Experiment with freedom and democracy
- Grade 12: Modern America and its challenges of ethical leadership; applying the lessons of history to modern America.

### **Leadership Strand**

The theme of Leadership will be explored across the curriculum and through other aspects of school life, such as school governance, community projects, extra-curricular activities, apprenticeships, and the Senior Project which will involve the creation of a for-profit or non-profit business.

History classes will feature a study of great leaders of the past, understanding what made them great leaders, and what traits students can incorporate into their own lives, and what flaws/mistakes to avoid, to become great leaders themselves. Other courses such as Business

Ethics, Constitutional Studies, Rhetoric and Debate, and the Morality of Free Markets will focus on ethical leadership in the modern world, calling on the resources of national and local leaders in the areas of business, current affairs, philanthropy, health, and education, among others. It will also include short courses and special presentations on current issues of leadership in business, government, law, technology and other environments. Other courses and learning activities in the “**Leadership Strand**” include: Physical Education and Health, Independent Study, Extended Learning Opportunities and the Senior Project.

### **Instructional Approach**

Teaching and learning at The Founders Academy will draw upon the research-based Paideia Active Learning approach for organizing instruction. The approach allocates proportions of instructional time to *direct teaching* for the acquisition of organized knowledge, *coaching* for the development of intellectual skills (includes cooperative and project based learning), and *Socratic seminars* for increased understanding of ideas and values.

Recent research by Richard Clark, Paul Kirschner, and John Sweller published in the Spring 2012 issue of *American Educator* provides strong support of a multifaceted approach that includes a specific allocation of time for direct teaching. Appropriate to The Founders Academy's interest in attracting and enabling the success of students from across a wide range of backgrounds, research on Paideia reform indicates a positive effect on the climate of the classroom and school, increasing both student and teacher interest in academic study and democratic self-governance.

## **Project-Based Learning**

The Founders Academy will offer a variety of project-based and cooperative learning opportunities which will enrich the student's learning experience. Community-based, and "real-world experiences" will also be an integral component to the learning program. This approach will give students the opportunity to select and study topics with great depth and breadth according to their interests.

## **(G) Academic and other learning goals and objectives**

### **Leadership Goals**

- After four years in the program, at least 90% of students will demonstrate advanced characteristics and skills of leadership, as measured by a rubric for assessing relevant evidence contained in each student's portfolio, evidence provided by teachers, and evidence provided by at least two community references with whom each student has interacted.
- Each year of the program, all students will fulfill the requirements of an effective leadership role in some aspect of school or community life: student government, internship, community service, independent project, coordinator of group project, etc. - as documented in each student's portfolio. As an option for achieving this goal, students will be strongly encouraged to work either independently or with a group of students over multiple years to launch a small business or non-profit venture, complete with business plan, market analysis, an implementation period, and periodic reporting back to stakeholders. The student's self-evaluation of success and

opportunities for improvement will be essential to the success of this leadership demonstration project.

- With reference to The Founders Academy's framework of values and code of conduct (TBD), all students will express and refine their own personal beliefs and values that guide the student's attitudes, decisions, and interactions with others. Progress will be documented each year by a collection of writings included in each student's portfolio and used for annual reflection and planning for the following year.
- At least 80% of students will be college or career ready by the time they graduate from The Founders Academy, as measured by college acceptance rates, a survey-plus-interview instrument for certifying career-ready skills, and follow-up studies of progress in college or career.

TFA academic and other learning goals are directly aligned with its vision and mission to develop mindful and creative leaders with a strong background in the knowledge, dispositions toward learning, and character-building experiences. Graduates of TFA will be expected to go on to meaningfully contribute to sustaining and strengthening those values and institutions that have made our nation great. Assessment of progress toward achieving those goals will be multifaceted and will include both qualitative and quantitative measures for formative indicators and summative results.

Among the variety of measures to be used for accountability and informing instruction, heavy emphasis will be placed on practices that meet the criteria for authentic assessment - performance assessment that is less contrived and more learner-centered in nature. Of central importance in this process will be the development and periodic review of electronic student

portfolios, uniquely designed to chart progress in demonstrating growth in the characteristics of thoughtful, imaginative, and productive young leaders.

### **Academic Goals**

- Students will exceed the average performance of New Hampshire students on NECAP, PSAT, SAT, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment (2015) for all subjects tested.
- Students will meet the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) objective for applicable subjects for all subgroups each year, or will meet any alternative state performance goals approved in lieu of NCLB requirements.
- At least 80% of students will master the performance objectives for courses in English, history, science, and mathematics each year as measured by multiple assessments (tests, performance tasks, exhibitions).
- At least 80% of students will demonstrate positive levels of interest in learning at high levels each year in at least a majority of their classes as measured by documented teacher observation and a student survey instrument.
- After three years in the program, at least 80% of students will demonstrate an advanced ability to originate and proceed with exploring a line of questioning that leads to a deeper understanding of ideas and concepts, as measured by a rubric for assessing related evidence contained in each student's portfolio.
- After three years in the program, at least 80% of students will demonstrate an advanced understanding and performance skills of language as used in influencing how one perceives the world, thinks about it, and chooses to act upon it - as measured by a rubric for assessing relevant evidence contained in each student's portfolio

- Each year, at least 80% of students will demonstrate increased knowledge of the history of technology and its effects on perception and expression as measured by documentation of related research projects conducted by individual and groups of students each year.
- All seniors will satisfactorily complete a capstone project that represents a culmination of each student's learning and research that draws both broadly and specifically from each student's classical education. The project will also incorporate skills and understanding demonstrated through an act of exemplary leadership - as measured by a rubric and assessed jointly by faculty, fellow students, and community volunteers.

**(H) Achievement tests to be used to measure pupil academic and other goal achievement**

**Standardized Testing**

Per RSA 194-B:8 V, TFA will utilize standardized testing for all grade levels required by law. This testing will include the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) which will be utilized until 2014. As required by law, TFA will begin utilizing CCSS and the Smarter Balanced Assessment in spring 2015. In addition, other supplemental testing methods may be used, such as the Northwest Evaluation Assessments (NWEA). At the beginning of the school year, students will be given benchmark assessments for reading and mathematics.

Achievement tests will be used to measure pupil academic and other goal achievement including, but not limited to, objective and age-appropriate measures of literacy and numeracy skills, including spelling, reading, expository writing, history, geography, science, and mathematics.

TFA will rely on standardized testing to determine how students are progressing through these areas. In addition to standardized testing a variety of rubrics will be developed by the appropriate faculty to measure academic progress. Examples of rubrics needed are critical thinking, presentation, team participation, quality of writing, research skills, and quality of overall project/presentation, leadership skills and mathematics. This list is not final and may be influenced by the faculty in the classroom and curriculum development.

Age based assessments will be applied to measure student academic progress. They may be administered throughout the year with a minimum of two times per year. Ideally testing will be administered in September and again in May. Initially, TFA is planning to test as needed to measure student progress against the curriculum. This will provide ample opportunity to make any necessary changes needed to achieve student academic success.

**(I) For schools offering high school grade levels, graduation requirements will be sufficient to ensure that the school has provided an adequate education for its pupils.**

### **Graduation Requirements**

TFA minimum high school graduation requirements will meet or exceed the state minimum, preparing every student to graduate with multiple pathway options, including readiness for entry into and success at college.

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>NH State Req.</b>	<b>TFA Req.</b>	<b>NH State Credit(s)</b>	<b>Founders Academy Credit(s)</b>
Arts and Music Education	✓	✓	0.5 credit	1 credit
Information and Communications Technologies	✓	✓	0.5 credit <i>or demonstrated proficiency</i>	0.5 credit
English	✓	✓	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	✓	✓	* 3 credits	* 3 credits
Physical Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Physical Science</li> <li>• Integrated Biological Science and Chemistry (IBC)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	2 credits	2 credits
History: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US &amp; NH History</li> <li>• World History, Global Studies, or Geography</li> <li>• Ancient Civilizations</li> <li>• European History</li> <li>• The Great American Experiment</li> <li>• Modern America and its Challenges</li> </ul>	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	1 credit 0.5 credit	1 credit 0.5 credit 0.5 credit 0.5 credit 0.5 credit 0.5 credit
US and NH Government / Civics	✓	✓	0.5 credit	0.5 credit
Economics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Micro Economics</li> <li>• Macro Economics</li> </ul>	✓	✓ ✓	0.5 credit	0.5 credit 0.5 credit
Health Education	✓	✓	0.5 credit	1 credit
Physical Education	✓	✓	1 credit	1 credit
Foreign Language & Culture		✓		2 credits
Open Electives	✓		6 credits	
Business & Entrepreneurship <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		2 credits
Rhetoric and Debate <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		1 credit
Ethics <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		1 credit
Constitution / Founding Documents <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		1 credit
Accounting & Investments <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		0.5 credit
Domestic & International Law <i>(qualifies for Open Electives)</i>		✓		0.5 credit
Adv. Foreign Language & Culture (optional)				1 credit
Adv. Physical Education (optional)				1 credit
Adv. Rhetoric and Debate (optional)				1 credit
Senior Project		✓		0.5 credit
Total Required Credits			20 credits	26 credits
Possible Credits			N/A	29 credits

\* including algebra credit that can be earned through a sequential, integrated, or applied program.

## **(J) Staffing Overview**

### **Planning and Development**

The period from charter authorization until 4-6 months before the school opens to students will be considered the Period of Planning and Organizational Development. Planning will commence once authorization is granted. This period will take approximately three to six months, based on the assumption of authorization in summer of 2013. During the planning and development period, project staff will include start-up coordinators, as needed consulting specialists, personnel from other organizations, and volunteers.

Tasks related to school development include:

- Board initiations and government training
- Planning and coordination
- Facility initiatives
- Curriculum development and course design
- Materials development and marketing
- Set-up of administrative systems
- Strategic planning
- Financial operations, revenue initiatives
- Dissemination of material to schools, parents, and colleges

### **Staffing**

TFA is committed to recruiting highly qualified staff with a diverse range of skills, teaching and administrative experience, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Other desired qualities and qualifications include: a commitment to the mission and vision of the school, an ability to work effectively on a team with colleagues, students, families, and community members; experience with a variety of instructional approaches, including project-based

learning; interest or expertise working with a diverse student population; and a commitment to their own professional growth.

### **School Director**

TFA Director will be responsible for the leadership, day-to-day business affairs, and school operation as delegated by the Board of Trustees. The School Director will lead, support, and engage with the school, which will:

- Allow students and faculty to maximize their achievements
- Establish a school culture built on respect, leadership, responsibility, and support
- Create relationships with and to work with local school districts
- Assume overall responsibility for supervision of staff and students
- Hire additional administrative staff as needed
- Follow all State and Federal requirements and standards
- Supervise and evaluate the work of staff
- Oversee the class scheduling process
- Supervise adequate testing and evaluation of students achievement
- Promote safety and good health practices by adherence to public codes/regulations.

### **Director Qualifications**

- Meet all NH regulations for eligibility
- Master's Degree from an accredited university, preferred
- Minimum of 5 years teaching and/or school administration experience, preferred
- Experience with administrative duties in a school or business

- Background in high school education, preferred
- Demonstrated leadership, people management, and business management experience
- Such other qualifications as the Board may find appropriate.

**Business Manager – (½ Time during year 1 and 2)**

*The Business Manager reports to the Director and will be responsible for:*

- Setting up the school financial systems
- Working with the director to prepare budget and other financial documents for board review and approval
- Preparing purchase orders and banking deposits
- Preparing information for payroll processing
- Assisting the Director when needed
- Filing proper paper work with proper agencies
- Working with the Director to oversee proper ADM count
- Supporting grant writing and management

**Business Manager Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university, business and accounting preferred
- No less than three years of experience as a Business/Operations Manager
- Experience preparing purchase orders and bank deposits
- Experience preparing payroll processing
- Experience with grant writing and management
- Such other qualifications as the Board may find appropriate

## **Special Education Liaison**

TFA recognizes that some students have special educational needs and may require specialized educational programming that goes beyond what is ordinarily provided by regular classroom programs. Therefore, a special education liaison will be hired.

The Special Education Liaison will coordinate all state and federal requirements as necessary for TFA to fulfill the responsibilities which fall to a New Hampshire charter school, in accordance with RSA 194-B:11. This position will become full-time as enrollment increases. To this end, this individual will:

- Ensure that documented special education students reach their maximum potential
- Realize that all students are special and may need individualized help in certain areas
- Commit to the success of TFA' students, and to the TFA' mission, and collaborate with faculty as a member of a dynamic instructional team
- Establish relationships with district Special Education Departments and work with the students' school districts to coordinate services for students with special needs, 504s or IEPs.

This individual will also work with local agencies and consultants to identify these children throughout New Hampshire.

## **Teachers**

The Board of Trustees will comply with RSA 194-B: 14. Section IV, which states, "*IV. The teaching staff of a chartered public school shall consist of a minimum of 50 percent of teachers either New Hampshire certified or having at least 3 years of teaching experience*".

## **Volunteer Staffing**

TFA will use parents, districts, and college campuses to initiate volunteer programs.

TFA will also be in contact with agencies that service low-income families and other local family services interested in collaborating. TFA has been approached by several educators such as administrators, educational experts, and paraprofessionals who have offered to volunteer to consult with us from set-up to operation.

## **(K) Personnel Compensation Plan**

### **Salary**

The Director, Teachers, and Administrative Staff of TFA will be paid a salary. The salaries of full-time or part-time personnel shall be paid on a bi-weekly basis. Part-time employees can be paid on an hourly rate or monthly rate, whichever is deemed appropriate by the Director. All independent contractors, whether full-time or part-time, will be paid on an hourly rate based on negotiated rates. See budget for salary expectations.

### **Vacation**

TFA will publish an annual calendar of holidays and vacations during which the School will officially be closed. The calendar will generally coincide with the school district where the TFA facility shall reside. Full-time teachers will also receive a maximum of three (3) days of paid personal leave per year. Personal leave days must be used during the school year in which they are accrued. Vacation time shall be scheduled during school vacation weeks. Employees shall only schedule vacation during official school vacations during which the School will officially be closed, and not schedule vacation during school operation.

## **Sick Leave**

Sick leave is available to employees, providing full salary and benefits for absences due to personal illness or injury that prevent the employee from working, as follows: Full-time staff shall accrue sick leave at the rate of five (5) days per school year. If specified in the employee's contract, part-time staff, or staff working part of the school year shall accrue sick leave on a prorated basis to reflect the proportion of time or working months that the employee's schedule represents in relation to a full time schedule. Employees may accrue up to a total maximum of ten (10) days of sick leave. All employees shall inform the Director of an anticipated absence as soon as possible, and such leave (other than for unexpected circumstances) must be pre-approved by the Director. The Director may require an employee to verify the claimed reason for any absence and the employee shall be obligated to verify the claim with an official Doctor's note.

## **Retirement**

TFA Charter School intends to participate in either the New Hampshire State Retirement Program for public teachers (according to state requirements for our full-time salaried teachers) or shall participate in an official 401k retirement plan. Participation in a retirement program is subject to availability and cost.

## **(L) Pupil Transportation**

Charter school students will have access to transportation to the class program only if they reside in the district where the charter school is located. The charter school will comply with charter law provisions that govern student transportation under Section 194-B:2, which states:

*Attendance at a charter school for the purposes of transportation shall not constitute*

*assignment under the provisions of RSA 189:6 and RSA 189:8. Pupils who reside in the school district in which the open enrollment or charter school is located shall be provided transportation to that school by the district on the same terms and conditions as provided for in RSA 189:6 and RSA 189:8 and that transportation is provided to pupils attending other public schools within that district. However, any added costs for such transportation services shall be borne by the charter school.*

Students attending the charter school who reside in the host school district shall ride transportation provided by that host district, with the charter school providing for added route costs, if so billed.

*For the purposes of open enrollment, neither the sending nor the receiving school district shall be obligated to provide transportation services for pupils attending an open enrollment school outside the pupil's resident district. No transportation will be provided by a sending school district or receiving charter school for students whose residence is other than where the school program is located.*

TFA anticipates that students will come from many different communities around New Hampshire. TFA will assist, to the extent possible, parents and students who wish to coordinate personal transportation.

**(M) Statement of Assurances Related to Non-discrimination**

TFA shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, handicap, or sexual/gender orientation, ethnic origin or marital status in the selection of students or staff, or in the administration of its educational program, or in any other way as is prohibited by relevant state and federal law. The Board of Trustees shall develop and adopt a policy and create administrative procedures to address complaints or concerns.

**(N) Method of Coordinating with a Pupil's Local Education Agency (LEA) for Matters Pertaining to Special Education Programs or Services**

As a state authorized open enrollment school, TFA will accept applications from any student who is a New Hampshire resident. In accordance with New Hampshire law (RSA 194-B:8), TFA will not discriminate against any student with a disability as defined in RSA 186-C. Under New Hampshire's charter school statute, RSA 194-B:11, III, when a child with disabilities attends a chartered public school, all current options available to the parent and the school district are retained. TFA will operate in compliance with all state and federal laws.

Pursuant to RSA 194-B:11, III, the decision-making responsibility for the special education process for children with disabilities attending a public charter school, remains with the student's sending school district. In addition, RSA 194-B:11, III provides that the sending school district remains responsible for the funding for children with disabilities attending a chartered public school. Any federal funding or other funding available to a sending district related to special education, to the extent and in a manner acceptable to the funding source, shall also be directed to the receiving chartered public school on an eligible per pupil basis pursuant to RSA 194-B:11, IV.

TFA will work closely with a student's LEA to ensure a smooth transition and will review all documentation pertaining to the student's educational needs. In the event that a student comes with a 504 Accommodation Plan or an Individualized Education Plan, the TFA Director or designated staff, will meet with the LEA's special education team at scheduled meetings to review and adjust educational goals. The sending district will be required to provide TFA with a complete copy of each student's IEP for implementation and monitoring purposes.

## **(O) Admission and Enrollment Policy and Procedures**

TFA is committed to building a strong and diverse community of learners. Admission to TFA shall be open to any student who resides in the State of New Hampshire. Methods of admission shall not be designed, intended or used to discriminate or violate individual rights in any manner prohibited by law. For the success of the school and its students, TFA will help educate prospective families on the benefits and challenges of attending a public charter school. TFA will hold multiple, pre-enrollment information sessions, in an effort to allow prospective families to learn more about TFA and the public charter school experience.

### **Admission Procedures:**

TFA will follow the basic method of admissions that defines charter schools nationwide:

- Admission shall be blind.
- Should the number of applicants exceed capacity; students will be chosen by a lottery system, with a wait list developed from the lottery overflow.

### **Admissions Process Overview**

- Prospective students and their families will be required to attend at least one informational meeting at which TFA's educational approach and expectations of students and their families will be explained, prior to enrollment.
- TFA will produce application packets for prospective students about the school, its philosophy and expectations of attending students, their families. These and other student related policies will be posted and available online.
- Parents will be asked to sign an agreement indicating their understanding of the School's Mission and other expectations as part of the admission process.
- Interested families will then submit their application.

- A committee will review applications for completeness.
- Should applicants exceed the number of spaces available, a blind lottery, organized by grade and will be held. Those not accepted in the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order determined by the lottery.
- All accepted students will receive notification. Those who have been wait-listed will be notified.
- Accepted students and their families will be required to sign a commitment to attend form and return it to TFA.
- Soon after the enrollment process is complete, TFA will hold meetings for admitted students and their families and provide an orientation for students and families.

### **Enrollment Provisions**

- *TFA* will offer automatic re-enrollment to its students, provided they are in good standing at the end of each year. Families will be asked to sign a letter of intent to re-enroll by a stated date preceding the lottery.
- *TFA* will admit students from the wait-list should space become available after the lottery.
- Siblings of children already enrolled at the TFA will receive preference.
- The Board reserves the right to give preference in enrollment to children of school faculty, administration, and volunteering board members.
- *TFA* will reserve a maximum of five spots for children of the Founders of *The Founders Academy* and the *Foundation*.

**(P) Philosophy of pupil governance and discipline, and age-appropriate due process procedures to be used for disciplinary matters including suspension and expulsion.**

The procedures for suspension and expulsion will include appropriate due process, will be specific, clear and will be compliant with state laws governing discipline. The purpose of the suspension and expulsion procedures will be to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

The Founder's Academy Charter School will develop student governance and discipline and age appropriate due process procedures. We will work with qualified staff with experience in these areas as we move forward. A general outline of how we plan to address these items is outlined below.

- A formal policy and procedure will be developed addressing student governance and age appropriate discipline with a code of honor being a major focus.
- Students will be taught strong communication, self-advocacy, self-discipline and leadership skills as they move through the curriculum.
- The school will provide support to staff and faculty when an incident arises and try to use effective communication for problem solving as the first step.
- Behavioral plans will be developed as needed.
- The procedure will include clear steps for reporting inappropriate behavior to the designated staff/faculty.
- The family will be informed of the behavior and made aware of any future consequences that may occur if the behavior continues.
- The procedure will include steps for proper documentation beginning with the reporting of the behavior and ending with the final decision and outcome.

- If disruptive/disrespectful behavior continues and the options outlined in the procedure are exhausted expulsion may occur.
- Additional procedures will be outlined for violent behavior or bullying that may occur at the school. The procedure will allow for detention, suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of the incident.

TFA will account for suspended or expelled students in its average daily attendance accounting as provided by law.

**(Q) Method of administering fiscal accounts and reporting, including a provision requiring fiscal audits and reports to be performed by an independent certified public accountant.**

TFA will follow NH public school accounting guidelines and will put in place internal accounting controls necessary to safeguard its assets and to prevent and detect financial statement misstatements. The School will maintain accurate financial records in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for non-profit corporations. An annual financial report will be provided including an audit by an independent certified public accountant.

The Board of Trustees will appoint a Treasurer to provide the oversight necessary for monitoring the financial status of the School. The Treasurer shall report the financial status of the School to the Board of Trustees at least monthly. The Board shall also adopt policies for the financial management of the School, including policies on conflicts of interest for Board members, Administration, and Faculty.

The Board will approve an accounting policies and procedures manual to be followed by all employees, contractors and Board members to ensure the proper tracking and use of School funds. A general account will be set up for the administration of funds, and the Treasurer and

named members of the Board of Trustees will have check-writing authority. Two signatures will be required on all check manifests. Each individual with check-writing authority will be covered by a fidelity bond in accordance with the guidelines of the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration.

Except for emergency purchases approved by the School's authorized personnel (up to a maximum to be established by the Board of Trustees), all expenditures and contracts will be handled through an encumbrance system of purchase orders for clear tracking of expenditures and status of account balances.

#### **Annual Audit**

TFA will comply with all required reporting requirements specified in NH charter school section, (RSA 194-B:10, I-V). Section 194-B:10, I-V requires that all public charter schools issue an annual report, perform annual financial audits, program audits, and participation during the annual school budget process. The School will also comply with all requirements set forth in ED 318.07 regarding the contents of its annual report.

As required by law, the annual report will be provided to the state board and any person who requests it. In addition, a summary version of the annual report and periodic reports will be made available to the parent or guardian of each student at the School the public. The Board will select an external, independent auditor annually to complete the required annual audit and report. The audit will address accounting practices and review the School's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with applicable generally accepted accounting principles. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within six months of the close of the fiscal

year. The Board of Trustees will review and respond to the audit report, if necessary, and include the audit results in its annual report.

**(R) Annual budget, including all sources of funding (also include a proposed five-year budget containing revenue and expenditures).**

The Founders Academy will use the state's average middle and high school tuition costs as a basis for shaping its own budget. The Founders Academy will apply for a federal charter school startup grant which will be used in accordance with U.S. DOE guidelines pertaining to proper charter school startup expenditures.

The Founders Academy Foundation recognizes that the financial sustainability of a charter school requires a long-term fiscal plan, especially after the expiration of the federal grant. The Founders Academy Foundation is committed to working with the Board of Trustees to seek a diverse portfolio of revenue sources to establish and guarantee long-term fiscal sustainability. Enclosed to this application in Appendix B is the proposed 5-year annual budget plan for the school outlining the use of budget and startup grant, as well as donated funds.

**Fiscal Issues**

The Director and Business manager will develop in partnership with the Finance Committee a balanced yearly budget. TFA Board of Directors will review and approve each budget prior to each fiscal year. Annual budgets will contain adequate reserves and will be submitted to the appropriate State Offices, and any other entities as required by law.

The Founders Academy may receive funding in accordance with NH State and Federal law, and will opt to receive funding directly from the State. These funds may include, but are not limited to, general purpose block grant, categorical block and non-block grants; charter school

funding from the New Hampshire Department of Education, the federal government or other sources; and any other available or mutually agreeable sources of funding for programs. TFA expects that any funds received by the charter authorizer and due to the school will be forwarded to TFA in a timely fashion.

**(S) School calendar arrangement and the number and duration of days pupils are to be served pursuant to RSA 194-B:8, III**

TFA will follow, at a minimum, a 180-day school year in accordance with the RSA 194-B:8, III. TFA expects to follow the calendar of district in which the charter school is located in order to best coordinate transportation services and better serve multi-student households. Any school-specific changes to the schedule will be monitored carefully to ensure that our students meet the required number of attendance hours. It is expected that days will begin at approximately 8:30 am and end at 4:00 pm, though some flexibility may be required to meet our host district's bus route schedule. Should transportation issues result in lost educational hours, we will address this loss and amend our students' school hours.

**(T) Provision for Evidence of Adequate Insurance Coverage**

Pursuant to RSA 194-B:1, TFA will be a public school afforded the same protections as all other public schools under RSA 507(b), which provides for limited general liability for the charter school and its agents.

The Board will procure and provide evidence of adequate insurance coverage as required by the State, including but not limited to general liability for the School, workman's

compensation, board errors and omissions, and faculty coverage. The insurance program will be in place as the first Board of Trustees begins its duties.

**(U) Identity of Consultants to be Used for Various Services, if Known**

During the period of startup and development, TFA may require tasks addressed by and conducted by specialists in certain fields. TFA has formed an Advisory Board with specialists in various fields to advise and assist the startup and development phase of the school. In addition, consultants and specialist shall be hired as needed during and after the startup period.

The following advisors and consultants have joined TFA's advisory board:

- Whitney K. Newey, PhD, MIT, Jane Berkowitz Carlton and Dennis William Carlton  
Professor of Microeconomics, Chair MIT Department of Economics
- Beth McClure, NH Certified Principal, Strong Foundations Public Charter School.
- Jennifer Cava, M.Ed., School Director, Academy for Science and Design (ASD) Public Charter School
- Peter Stackhouse, Executive Director, M.Ed., Great Bay Public Charter School, NH Certified Superintendent, NH Certified Principal, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS)
- Jessica Golden, M.Ed. Special Education Counselor, Academy Science and Design Public Charter School, NH Certified Guidance Counselor, Director of Guidance, General Special Education Teacher, and Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities Teacher
- Matt Southerton, Director, New Hampshire Center for Innovative Schools
- Christopher Erdody, NH Certified Teacher
- Richard Whitehead, Center Director, Oxford Learning, Curriculum Consultant

- Harold Maughan, MOE, Curriculum Consultant
- Jill Cane, Ed.D, Curriculum Consultant
- Thomas P. Farrelly, SIOR & Executive Director, Cushman & Wakefield
- Samuel A. Tamposi Jr., President, The Tamposi Company Inc.
- Jared Argyle, VP/GM, Aerial Cable Systems/A Berkshire Hathaway Company
- Gary Gustafson, CEBS, Consultant,
- Ellen Riggi, Human Resources Consultant
- Harry H. Barnes, Information Technology Consultant
- David Dione, Facility Construction Consultant
- Debra Paul, Owner/Publisher, Nutfield Publishing LLC, PR & Media Consultant
- Debra Waitt, Local Community Outreach
- Virginia Landry, Local Community Outreach

**(V) Philosophy of parent involvement and related plans and procedures.**

Parental involvement is a core philosophy of the school. The school will have a well-defined parent involvement initiative through the Parent Steering Committee. The parent steering committee can have up to two representatives on the Board of Trustees and have regular attendance at their meetings by the School Director. TFA believes that parents are an integral part of the school community and bring valuable input, energy and skills to the school's success.

Because not all students have parents to share in their academic interests, TFA will identify business and community members who are available as mentors, providing guidance specific to students' interests. A Parent Steering Committee will be created within the first few

weeks of school. The Committee serves as the communication vehicle between parents, the School Director and Board of Trustees.

**(W) A plan to develop and disseminate information to assist parents and pupils with decision-making about their choice of school.**

To ensure that all residents have an equal opportunity to apply to TFA, an extensive and widely broadcast marketing effort will be initiated through The Founders Academy Foundation and the NH Center for Innovative Schools. Information will be widely broadcast through newspaper, websites, libraries and other public places and social media to ensure that families are aware of TFA as a choice, and is available to them. As students from lower income or minority families may suffer disproportionately due to a lack of access to technology or to advanced curriculum, particular attention will be paid to reaching those students through their schools, communities, and other public services, to ensure their families are aware of TFA as a choice and is available to them.

During the initial months of planning, information will be disseminated through bulletins, advisories, social media, and posting on informational websites. Materials for a major informational outreach program will be disseminated to public school administrators, school personnel, parents, businesses, and foundations. Upon approval of the charter, the Board of The Founders Academy Foundation will develop informational brochures describing the school, its mission, its approach to education, and the expectations and opportunities the program hopes to provide. Informational brochures will be distributed to stakeholders and interested parties through the same communications channels listed above.

**(X) Global Hold Harmless Clause**

In accordance with RSA 194-B: 3, II(x), TFA, its successors, and assigns, covenants and agrees at all times to indemnify and hold harmless the host school district and any other school district which sends its students to the charter school, and their school boards, officers, directors, agents, employees, all funding districts and sources, and their successors and assigns, (the “indemnified parties”) from any and all claims, demands, actions and causes of action, whether in law or in equity, and all damages, costs, losses, and expenses, including but not limited to reasonable attorneys’ fees and legal costs, for any action or inaction of the charter school, its board, officers, employees, agents, representatives, contractors, guests and invitees, or pupils. The school shall have no obligation to hold harmless the Indemnified Parties for any claims, damages, losses, or expenses resulting from the Indemnified Parties’ own acts or omissions.

**(Y) Severability provisions and statement of assurance that any provision of the charter school contract found by competent authority to be contrary to applicable law, rule, or regulation shall not be enforceable.**

If any part of the charter contract is determined to be invalid or illegal by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidation or illegality shall not affect the remaining portions of the charter contract, which shall remain in full force and effect. Any provision of the charter school contract found by competent authority to be contrary to applicable law, rule, or regulation shall not be enforceable.

**(Z) Provision for Dissolution of the Charter School Including Disposition of its Assets**

Should TFA cease operation or have its charter revoked by its authorizer, the Board shall consult with an attorney and the Department of Education to assure that contractual and financial

obligations are met. Upon dissolution of the corporation all non-committed assets will be donated to public charter schools or other non-profits supporting charter schools as determined by the board.

**(AA) In the case of the conversion of a public school to a charter conversion school.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**(BB) A plan for the education of the school's pupils after the charter school may cease operation.**

A plan for each student's continued education, should the school cease to exist, will be determined individually with each student and his/her parent or legal guardian. Likely options would be, 1) re-integration into the student's assigned public school, 2) application to a different chartered public school, if available, or 3) other available options based on parent and student priorities. Upon cessation of operation and as soon as the Board of Trustees become aware, the records of each student would be transferred in a timely manner to the receiving school, and the staff and trustees would work with the receiving school, parents, and students to assure smooth and timely transitions.

**(CC) In addition to an application, each charter school applicant, in consultation with the local school board, shall prepare a proposed contract.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**(DD) An outline of the proposed accountability plan which clarifies expectations for evaluating the school's program and which contains an acknowledgement that a full accountability plan shall be developed and ready to implement prior to the date of opening.**

Schools ought to be measured by results. Therefore, TFA will develop and implement a specific accountability plan that seeks to report quantitative data and qualitative information in order to measure success in relation to stated goals. The Board of Trustees will seek to develop a timeline for the Director to report data and information in a manner that assesses the progress of each goal statement in order to measure effectiveness and provide the opportunity to revise practice, if warranted. If student learning is the broadest and most important goal set by the charter, then the charter itself maintains a distinct obligation to self-declare and request independent assessments to determine the state of affairs of its programming as defined by the following goal statement:

1. TFA will increase the enrollment of the student body to a sustainable level while not compromising the mission established within the charter.
  - a. Reach cap enrollment in each successive year of operation.
  - b. Operate charter organization with existing fiscal resources.
  - c. Establish, maintain, and grow an endowment fund.
  
2. TFA will ensure that at least 80% of students earn a New Hampshire high school diploma.
  - a. Develop, structure, and track student mastery of competencies.
  - b. Develop, structure, and track student mastery of dispositions.
  - c. Maintain an Advisor-Advisee relationship.
  - d. Set goal of 100% of enrollment exiting TFA with a NH diploma.

- 3.** TFA will extend the culturally relevant experience of its students.
  - a.** Connect competencies to student real-world experiences.
  - b.** Assess student performance when engaged in off-campus experiences.
  
- 4.** TFA will connect students to a real-world experience by partnering with community business and public, or non-profit organizations.
  - a.** Create Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO) to place students with profit and non-profit organizations for mentoring
  - b.** Create apprenticeship opportunities for students with business in the community.
  - c.** Create internship opportunities for students with for profit and with non-profit organizations and local business.
  - d.** Assess student competency mastery as performed for ELO, apprenticeship, and internships.
  - e.** Assess student capstone experience.
  
- 5.** TFA will increase the number of students who are accepted to post-secondary learning.
  - a.** TFA shall set its goals to a 100% enrollment initiative for a post-secondary learning experience.
  - b.** Develop, implement, and track student experiences after graduation.